

IN A COLLEGE CHAPEL

JOHANNES BROENE

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In a college chapel.

In a College Chapel

*Brief Addresses Delivered in
the Chapel of Calvin College,
Together with Certain Other
Lectures and Essays :-: :-:*



By

JOHANNES BROENB

President of Calvin College

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TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER

In a College Chapel

PREFACE

“It is not a melancholy *utinam* of my own, but the desires of better heads, that there were a general Synod; not to unite the incompatible difference of religions, but for the benefit of learning, to reduce it as it lay at first, in a few and solid authors, and to condemn to the fire those swarms and millions of rhapsodies begotten only to distract and abuse the weaker judgment of scholars, and to maintain the trade and mystery of typographers.”

Thus wrote that learned and devout man, Sir Thomas Browne, knight and physician, almost three hundred years ago in his *Religio Medici*, (Sec. XXIV). How astonished the good man would be could he see the veritable flood of books issuing from our presses today. Unquestionably far too many books are being published, especially too many that never should have been permitted to go to press. One oftentimes becomes discouraged in battling against the overwhelming tide of printed matter, and almost wishes that some super-censor, some Platonic philosopher-king, some Brownian general synod, might weed out all that for one or another reason is worthless or nearly so. The merely vicious one can usually rather easily detect and evade, but not so easily

much that while innocuous enough is valueless because it merely restates what has been said before.

Conscious as I am of this fact it is not without much diffidence that I am adding to this deluge. My only excuse is that it is urged that many students who heard these talks would be glad to see them in print, and that many former students who have not lost interest in Calvin, and others as well, would appreciate the opportunity of reading what I said at chapel. Just how much of truth there is in these assertions will, I suppose, be best evidenced by the sale.

Many readers never look at prefaces. They make a big mistake. I think I never skip one. True, not seldom they are disappointing, but often, too, one finds them the most instructive and the most interesting part of a book. Thus a good preface will acquaint you with the author's purpose. Titles often leave you in the dark concerning matters on which you desire and, if you are to judge fairly of the writer's performance, need more light. Thus, for example, a history of the United States may be written in various ways, from various angles, and with varying purpose. An appropriate preface will enlighten you on all these points. It enables you to be fair to the writer. That is why I would wish every reader of this volume to read the preface. It will enable him to read the talks that follow in their proper setting and may spare me some unfair criticism.

Again, prefaces are often remarkably self-

revelatory. Whether the writer is conceited or modest, generous or otherwise, garrulous or laconic, often reveals itself in the preface. Of course, the first impressions thus gleaned must be tested by a careful reading of the text that follows.

The following talks are for the greater part informal. In saying this I am not attempting to convey the idea that I gave little or no thought to their preparation. That would be false. No audience is more critical than a student audience, and this stimulus induced me to give, I am frank to say, the best I had. If any reader should think this best is little I hope he will, at least, appreciate the effort. He should remember, too, that the time devoted to chapel exercises is too brief to permit of doing anything like justice to almost any subject one may desire to present. I have, however, found it a wonderful schooling to be compelled to discuss big subjects within a time limit of not to exceed fifteen or twenty minutes.

He who publishes a book, if it is read at all, must expect criticism. Much criticism is just, some unjust. Unjust criticism is generally due not to malice, as so many writers seem to think, but to ignorance, ignorance sometimes of the subject under discussion, but more often of the author's circumstances and purpose. Thus the reader who criticises these addresses because not a single subject is adequately dealt with is probably ignorant of the fact already referred to, namely, that our entire chapel period lasts only twenty minutes. Again some reader may criti-

cise these talks of mine because they are by no means all devotional in character. In thus criticising he is losing sight of the fact that they neither can nor should be. Students must be given guidance in various fields and in various ways. Positively the worst thing a college head could do would be to preach to the students every time he mounts the platform. The reader should also keep in mind that even addresses of a strictly devotional character when made before a body of students should differ somewhat in presentation from those delivered before a general audience.

With a few exceptions these addresses were all delivered during the years 1925 to 1928, in my capacity first of acting president and then as president of Calvin College. That on Luther was delivered in connection with our participation in the world-wide celebration in 1917 of the four-hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. On that occasion our dean, the then principal A. J. Rooks, presided, my colleague B. K. Kuiper spoke on the significance of the Reformation, while I spoke briefly on the initiator of the movement.

On Armistice Day, 1920, our highly esteemed professor of mathematics, William Rinck, together with a son, came to an untimely end in an automobile accident. Upon invitation I spoke at the memorial exercises that followed on "William Rinck as a Colleague." This address first appeared in our student annual, *Prism*, in the year 1921, and is now reprinted here.

The talks on "Appreciation," "Two Proverbs," and "Humility," were delivered at commencement occasions, and that on "The Proper Function of Calvin College" was my inaugural speech of 1926.

During the academic year 1926-1927 I gave our students a series of talks on some of the learned professions. That on "The Teacher" is a condensation of what I said long ago in a lecture on "The Qualifications Essential in the Christian Teacher," published in 1913, in a little book under the title *M. C. T. I. Lectures*.

I have added two essays and two lectures. The lecture on "Some Current Educational Ideas and Ideals" was delivered in 1913, published by the Eerdmans-Sevensma Company in that year, and being out of print is now included in this volume. I believe it still has some value. I supplement this lecture with an essay on what I believe should be the proper aim of education, first printed in the *Christian School Magazine* in 1922.

The lecture on "Socrates" was first delivered under the auspices of the Grand Rapids Public Library. Subsequently it was read before the General Ministers' Conference of this city, and the Western Christian Teachers' Institute at Hull, Iowa.

"What is Philosophy" is a classroom lecture.

Lastly, it seemed to me that these brief addresses did not require in every instance a meticulously careful documentation. I believe, however, that the reader will find all necessary references both to verify the correctness of quotations, and,

should he become interested in some particular subject, for further reading.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to our stenographer, Mrs. Jacob Hoogstra, for careful typing.

J. Broene.

Grand Rapids, Mich.
July 31, 1928.

I

JACOB

Esau and Jacob, twins, what an interesting study in contrasts. Esau — burly, big-fisted, big-hearted, quick-tempered, headlong, impulsive; Jacob — smooth, slippery, crafty, coolly calculating, grasping. Did I have to choose my next-door neighbor from the twain, I would not hesitate. Who would not prefer Esau? Were I to buy from each a hundred sheep I would consider it a waste of time to examine those from Esau; not only would the tale be correct — there might be a hundred and one — but the sheep would be sound. I know that in advance. But, mark you, when it came to Jacob, I would examine each sheep, not so much to make sure of the count, but to satisfy myself that he had not worked off on me the scurviest animals in his herd.

Where did Jacob get his ugly traits? Not from Isaac, certainly not from Abraham who was one of God's noblemen. Well, the source is not far to seek. Who was it that in an evil hour prompted Jacob to perform that dirtiest of all dirty tricks — deceiving his blind father? Was it not Rebecca? And was not she the sister of Laban? And was not Jacob the living image of his uncle? Were not the two of them a precious pair when by and by they lived, so to speak, under one roof,

each endeavoring to overreach and to outscheme the other?

And yet, God chose for His own not Esau, but Jacob. Why? Was it possibly to show us of what shabby material He can fashion for Himself saints? For before God was through with him Jacob was just that, one whose name might properly be mentioned in the same breath with those of Abraham and Isaac. Oh, truly, it was a long schooling. Well might we call Jacob's life, "The Education of Jacob." What hard lessons God gave him to learn. How severe the discipline. And how slow was Jacob to master the lessons. Yet at the last he was no longer Jacob but the Israel God wanted him to be.

All God's saints are not fashioned out of quite such sorry clay as was Jacob, but every last one has so much to unlearn and so much to learn. To accomplish this purpose God very often uses adversity. "Jonge," said a dear old godly woman to me one day, "jonge, ik heb al wat door maakt." So she had. I knew something of her history, of her trials, of her tribulations. Devout Christians are seldom the product of much prosperity. To fashion them God burns the dross out of them and then out of the pure gold that remains, which He Himself first put into them, He makes unto Himself saints, saints who will glorify Him forever.

II

REHOB OAM

The Dutch have a saying to the effect that an apple does not fall far from the tree on which it grew. My impression is that more often than not it is used when one sees in a man some defect of character also found in his father. One would think that this saying could not apply in the case of Rehoboam, for it would seem that he had, as Benvenuto Cellini would say, "a pretty big dash of the fool in his composition,"¹⁾ yet his father was reputed for wisdom, for wholly exceptional wisdom. Now there is not the slightest doubt that Solomon's reputation in this respect was deserved. Did he not at the very outset of his career choose wisdom rather than years or wealth? However, this does not alter the fact that with all his wisdom Solomon committed acts of utter folly. It strikes me that these acts of foolishness can all be traced to one fundamental defect in his character, namely, his deeply rooted love of display. I admit it is characteristic of orientals in general but Solomon manifests it in a marked degree. Just study his life and see if this is not the case. His thousand concubines and wives are, I think, commonly attributed to a

¹⁾ *Autobiography*, Symonds translation, XC,

strong sensual strain in the man, and I suspect this was a factor, but I am convinced that here, too, the more important element was a desire to impress the world. Just as many of us seek to impress others by our houses, and furnishings, and automobiles, and our very clothes even, so Solomon wanted to show the world that he was king enough to afford a harem of a thousand women.

The inevitable consequence of all this display was grievously burdensome taxes. More and more reluctantly did the people pay them. Even in Solomon's day there were ominous murmurings, but when he died and Rehoboam came to the throne the widespread dissatisfaction found voice. A deputation waited upon the new king and presented this petition: "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.²⁾

What did Rehoboam do? Fool though he seems to have been he proceeded wisely. He took counsel. Wise men do. Young men deficient oft-times in wisdom and unaware of their deficiency, frequently decide matters offhand. They feel no need of advice. Older men have learned from experience that they have no monopoly of wisdom and hence when confronted by momentous decisions fail not to take counsel. Well, Rehoboam

²⁾ I Kings 12: 4.

found himself under the necessity of reaching a decision the consequences of which well might be serious. Wisely he consults first the graybeards who had been in Solomon's confidence and who gave him this advice: "If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants forever."³⁾

Had the young king but hearkened. What did he do? One would almost begin to doubt after all that Rehoboam was the fool he seems to have been, for again he acted wisely — before reaching his final decision he confers with young men. Was that wise? Most assuredly. Wisdom does not die with the ancients. Fortunate is the church whose leaders consist of both young and old men, fortunate is the college whose faculty includes not only old men, neither only young men, but both. They supplement each other. Young men are apt to be hasty, radical, venturesome, severe, but are apt, too, to possess initiative, courage, optimism; older men on the other hand are apt to be over-conservative, lacking in enterprise and daring, but their very conservatism acts as a check on the impulsiveness of youth, and too, they are likely to make more allowance for human frailties, having become more charitable with the passing of the years. Furthermore, they should have the "levenswijsheid" a young man cannot be expected to possess. I believe, therefore, that Rehoboam

³⁾ I Kings 12: 7.

should in no wise be condemned for consulting men of his own age.⁴⁾

The day comes when Rehoboam must announce his decision. Can you imagine the tenseness with which his petitioners listened to his reply? They must have hoped he would see the justice of their plea. How their faces must have fallen when the king from his throne, disregarding the counsel of the graybeards, replied roughly in the words of

⁴⁾ Since writing the above I happened once again on the following well-known passage in Bacon's essay, *Of Youth and Age*: "Young men are fitter to invent than to judge, fitter for execution than for counsel, and fitter for new projects than for settled business Young men, in the conduct and management of actions, embrace more than they can hold, stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue absurdly some few principles which they have chanced upon Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period, but content themselves with the mediocrity of success. Certainly it is good to compel employments of both Because the virtues of either may correct the defects of both."

I am reminded of a passage in Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Grossherzog Wilhelm Ernst Ausgabe, p. 266), that bears on this point. He is speaking of professors and asserts that the younger among them only teach to learn (*lehren um zu lernen*), and not only acquire their knowledge at the expense of their students but these latter do not learn what they should. Among the older men, on the other hand, continues Goethe, many are since long stationary; they only pass on the same fixed ideas, and much of what they teach is already obsolete or useless. He contends that between the two both sets of men cause a tragic conflict in the minds of their pupils.

I do not add this because I have seen much of this tragic conflict — though I believe it occurs — but because there is in the picture an element of truth.

his comrades: "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." ⁵⁾

Woe unto the land whose king is a fool. If Mr. Dooley ever read this story he must have grumbled with biting sarcasm that if Rehoboam had had just a little more sense he would have been half-witted. Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad. Rehoboam's reply was oil on the burning. It cost him ten of the twelve tribes and the only marvel is that he did not lose all. "But from not knowing how to govern people," said Castiglione in his famous *Book of the Courtier*, "there spring so many woes, deaths, destructions, burnings, ruins — that it may be said to be the deadliest pest that is to be found on earth." ⁶⁾

While reading this narrative for the so-manieth time there came to my mind a passage I once read in Machiavelli's *Prince*. "It is," says he, "an unerring rule; and of universal application that a Prince who is not wise himself can not be well advised by others" ⁷⁾ As they would say in New England, the ethics of Machiavelli were no better than they should be, but lacking in discernment he was not.

Seek learning. Seek wisdom more. Pray for

⁵⁾ I Kings 12: 14.

⁶⁾ Book 4, 8.

⁷⁾ Chapter 23.

it. Work for it. Wisdom is the product of much experience, wide reading, constant reflection.

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.” ⁸⁾

⁸⁾ Proverbs 3: 13–15.

III

PETER

Jesus gathered about Him from among his followers an inner circle of twelve. Within this inner circle there was a still smaller circle of three — Peter, John, and James. It was they and only they who were present when Jesus healed Peter's wife's mother, when the daughter of Jairus was raised from the dead, when Jesus ascended the Mount of Transfiguration. They and only they accompanied the Master into the heart of Gethsemane. Always these three.

Not only did Peter belong to this inner circle but he heads every list of the twelve. Evidently he was looked upon as a leader. Yet he had traits that I am sure most of us would much dislike in our associates. He was noisy, froward, big-mouthed, boastful, generally both the first and the last to speak, inclined to promise more than he performed, a hero while danger was still afar and then might prove craven in the actual presence of peril. He was impetuous, headlong, acted first and thought later. As somebody once said of Theodore Roosevelt, Peter wanted to be the bride at every wedding and the chief mourner at every funeral.

Somebody less familiar with the Bible than are you might ask, "how can you speak so posi-

tively of the man's traits?" Well, the answer is simple, is it not? There is no disciple of whom the Gospels give us more material for a character-sketch than Peter. In scene upon scene all unconsciously he lays bare his innermost soul — on the occasion of his calling, when Jesus asked what men said of him, when He asked the disciples if they too would not desert him, on the Mount of Transfiguration, at the last supper, in the garden, at the trial, at the grave, on the shores of Galilee, at Pentecost, at the healing of the impotent man, and on still other occasions Peter reveals himself completely, reveals his every virtue, his every defect.

In spite of the flaws of which I have just spoken Jesus loved the man and gave him a large place in his chosen band. If we do not like Peter's unlovely traits do not believe for one moment that Jesus did. That is out of the question. But Jesus saw great possibilities in the man, saw that He could use him to good purpose, provided He first winnowed out of him both his over-confidence and his cowardice, and, had we the time, it would be very interesting to see just how He went about that process. A man so hot-blooded, so headlong, and despite grave lapses so essentially courageous, might be converted into a mighty witness to the truth. Moreover, though at first acquaintance Peter may repel us, on closer acquaintance he fascinates us all, for if he was noisy he certainly was not sneaky. There is nothing gum-shoe about him, nothing coldly calculating as there was

about Judas. Evil did not fester in his mind as in that of the arch-betrayer. What a wholesome contrast he is to Judas. And how utterly human he was. Furthermore, if Peter was quick on the trigger, the man who can make up his mind quickly is the man of action, gets things done while others hesitate weighing every possible alternative. Jesus says to Peter, "follow me." Does Peter say, "let me think it over, let me consider it for a week"? No, he drops his oar, he drops his net, and follows Jesus. When, after His resurrection, Jesus stood on the shore and asked the disciples, "children, have ye any meat?" and the disciples noticed it was the Master, Peter and only Peter cast himself into the sea and swam to Jesus while the others came sedately in the boat. When Jesus asked them, "whom say ye that I am?" the disciples hesitated, I dare say some had not yet made up their minds, but Peter, always Peter, with his glorious impetuosity breaks out into his magnificent, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Oh, I think I know myself just a little having introspected much, I fear I would have been one of those hesitant disciples, endeavoring to make up my mind, careful to say nothing rash, but how gladly would I have been Peter with every last one of his faults could I have uttered those immortal words.

Impulsive—that one word characterizes Peter. As a recent writer expresses it graphically, Peter is like a man carrying a pan of water, who, when

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it slops over on one side so hastily changes the level that it slops over on the other.¹⁾ Peter is always slopping over on one or the other side. One moment, when conscious of his unworthiness, he says to the Master, "depart from me for I am a sinful man," but when a little later Jesus asks, "will you also go away?" Peter replies, "Lord, to whom shall we go!" When the Master proceeded to wash His disciples' feet Peter exclaimed, "Thou shalt never wash my feet," but a moment later cries, "Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and my head." When Jesus predicted that in the darkest hour of His life His disciples would desert him Peter declared, "although all shall be offended yet will not I," and then added vehemently, "if I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee in any wise." Yet before the cock crew thrice what did Peter do?

"It is a strange paradox," says the most recent biographer of Peter, "that the man who was from the first the most prominent of Christ's disciples, who took the lead of the infant Church, who was regarded as the typical chief of all Christian rulers, and was acknowledged by posterity as the Vicar of Christ Himself, should be remarkable not so much for his strength and consistency, but for his impulsiveness, lapses, and regrets." ²⁾

We must not, however, forget that after the resurrection Peter was a transformed man. True,

¹⁾ Brown, C. R., *These Twelve*, N. Y., 1926, p. 10.

²⁾ Foakes-Jackson, F. J., *Peter: Prince of Apostles*, N. Y., 1927, p. 31.

on occasion the old bar sinister might manifest itself so that his fellow-apostle Paul once reproved him to his face, but except for a rare lapse Peter after the resurrection conducts himself like a lion. How bold his Pentecostal sermon, how bold his defiance of the Jewish authorities, how bold his "we ought to obey God rather than men." Peter had become the rock Jesus wanted him to be. Indeed, Peter beautifully exemplifies what Christ can make of a man. This same Peter who trembled before a maid and thrice denied his Lord and Master, this same Peter in the days of Nero was faithful unto death.

One morning last year I spoke to you at chapel on Jacob. This morning on Peter. If the Lord can make saints out of Jacobs and Peters then there is hope even for you and for me, provided that whatever our shortcomings and sins, like Peter we accept Jesus as our personal savior.

IV

MARTIN LUTHER

Of the two Calvinism has been more often misrepresented, more often caricatured, libeled, and denounced than Lutheranism, but of the two Calvin has never been so maligned as has Luther. True, Calvin has not escaped calumny. He has been pictured a cold rationalist who reasoned about the attributes of God as a mathematician might reason about the properties of a triangle. He has been reported a heresy-hunter who insisted that Servetus be burned at the stake, and, indeed, until Kampschulte, Roman Catholic though he was, once for all silenced slanderous tongues, Roman Catholic historians relished telling a particularly vile story about the Genevan reformer. But, sum it all up, all, everything that can detract from the integrity of the man's character, from his alleged frigidity and the assertion that his college acquaintances habitually called him "the accusative case," to the heinous offense with which he was charged by Bolsec, even then you have nothing to compare in volume to the contumely heaped upon Luther. Walther, in his *Für Luther wider Rom*¹⁾, needs more than seven hundred pages merely to state and to refute the almost innumerable accusations made against Luther.

1) Halle, 1926.

Now why is this so? The answer is easy. The Reformation brought about a tremendous schism in the Church, a schism that Calvin did not cause. He belongs to the second not to the first generation of reformers. To Luther, not to Calvin, belongs the undying honor of having been elected by God to initiate that great movement we call the Reformation. Undying honor say we. Undying shame says the Roman Catholic. But for Luther, says the Romanist, but for Luther who knows but that with certain external reforms such as those contemplated by Erasmus, the great split might have been avoided. Grisar intimates as much in his monumental work on Luther. And hence it is upon Luther and not upon Calvin that the enemies of Protestantism empty their vials of wrath.

However, this is only half the story. Luther has been so endlessly more maligned than Calvin not only because he began the Reformation, but also, and especially too, because unlike Calvin it was so easy to vilify him. Calvin was sober, earnest, not given to jesting, circumspect, dignified, a Frenchman by birth and a gentleman by breeding. But Luther was jolly, possessed a strong sense of humor and that of the peasant type, remained, indeed, a peasant his life long, was coarse, careless, reckless, vehement, passionate, obstinate, and vituperative. He failed to heed the Biblical injunction to avoid even the very semblance of evil. He was careless in his statements of fact, on occasion making absolutely contradictory assertions. It is possible now to prove that in no

case can any adequate motive for misrepresentation be advanced, but that does not alter the fact that Luther's carelessness made it easy to refute Luther with Luther, and to brand him as untrustworthy.

His humor, sixteenth century peasant humor, induced him to say many things that have an unpleasant ring to a modern ear. Much can be said and has been said to extenuate the man's coarseness, doubtless he was not coarser than the majority of his contemporaries, but all this does not alter the fact that the *Tischreden* contain many expressions that we find hard to forgive. This coarseness, too, when the blood mounted to his temples and his violent wrath sought utterance, led him into outbursts that we cannot condone and that provide excellent material for his calumniators.

In a word, Luther was a man of many, many faults. Grievous faults. It would almost seem that the Lord chose him to lead the Reformation as much because of his faults as because of his virtues, in order that not Luther but the Almighty himself might be accorded all honor and praise for the great work of the Reformation.

I said as much because of his faults as because of his virtues. Undoubtedly that is an overstatement. Surely, more because of his virtues than because of his faults. If his defects were many his virtues were great. Saint, in the sense of unblemished, that he was not. Not at all. Neither did he entertain such a delusion. His virtues were

eminently the militant virtues. He was courageous to a fault. Absolutely fearless. God he feared and none other, neither princes nor potentates, not even the devil and all his angels. "Farewell," he wrote Spalatin, and "be not afraid." Well might he, one of the most courageous men that ever trod earth, thus admonish a friend.

He was remarkably unselfish. The cause meant everything to him. What happened to brother Martin he cared less about than almost anybody else. For the cause he labored in season and out of season, through good report and ill. He taught, he fought, he wrote, he lectured, he preached, he journeyed, he begged, he railed, he admonished, he castigated, he did all these things and others more until his dying day.

He was innocent of all petty jealousy. When Melancthon came to Wittenberg and as scholar speedily eclipsed Luther, Luther was loudest in extolling his friend's virtues. When his adherents lamented his absence at the Wartburg he rejoiced that the cause progressed without him.

Above all Luther was a man of faith, simple, childlike, heroic, unquestioning faith. Were Paul to write today the magnificent eleventh chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews I am confident we would find there something to this effect: "Through faith Luther, on his way to Worms and repeatedly before and since, defied boldly princes and potentates; bishops and archbishops; nuncios of the pope and the pope himself; powers secular and ecclesiastic; yea, defied the very Prince of

Evil, whatever guise he might assume." Because of his faith he broke out into his powerful, "*A Mighty Fortress is our God.*" It reflects the whole man, is of a piece with him. Take the lines:

"Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing."

And again:

"The Prince of Darkness grim,—
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure:
One little word shall fell him."

No translation of Luther's masterful German can ever quite satisfy. Permit me to add, therefore, the last stanza in Luther's original German precisely as he himself last wrote it:

"Das wort sie sollen lassen stan
und kein dank dazu haben.
Er ist bei uns wol auf dem plan
mit seinem Geist and gaben,—
Nemen sie den leib,
gut, ehr, kind und weib,
lass faren dahin,
sie habens kein gewin,
das Reich muss uns doch bleiben." ²⁾

George Eliot in her romance of the Renaissance, *Romola*, writing of another great though lesser reformer, namely Savonarola, says, and

²⁾ In *Luthers Dichtungen*, vol. IV of *Statuen Deutscher Kultur*, Munich, 1906, p. 19.

with these lines so applicable to Luther I close:

“It was the fashion of old, when an ox was led out for sacrifice to Jupiter, to chalk the dark spots and give the offering a false show of unblemished whiteness. Let us fling away the chalk and boldly say, — the victim is spotted but it is not therefore in vain that his mighty heart is laid on the altar of men’s highest hopes.” ³⁾

Appropriate though these words are, I prefer after all to close with the memorable words of Calvin, words both magnanimous and just:

“Even,” says Calvin, “though Luther called me a devil I shall continue to honor him as one of the most eminent servants of God.” ⁴⁾

³⁾ Last paragraph of chapter 25.

⁴⁾ Quoted by H. H. Kuyper, *Het zedelijk karakter der Reformatie Gehandhaafd Tegenover Rome*, Kampen, 1912, p. 32.

V

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

It has become a matter of tradition with us that we celebrate Washington's birthday by closing school. Whether, were he living, Washington would approve of this practice I am inclined to doubt. Do not become alarmed, I have not the slightest intention of depriving you of the day. I have something quite different in mind, namely this: why do we so often permit Lincoln's birthday to pass without taking much notice of it? Again, do not become alarmed, I have not the slightest intention of adding another to the holidays we already have, and thus depriving you of some of the schooling to which you are entitled. We can take note of Lincoln's birthday in other and probably better ways than by closing school. Today we are going to do this by means of these special exercises. The sophomore class has just presented us with this beautiful bust of the great Emancipator. In the name of the Faculty I gratefully accept this gift, trusting that for many years to come it may adorn the walls of this assembly room.

Since we are planning no special exercises this year for Washington's birthday, I desire at this time to express just a few hurried thoughts on these our two greatest presidents.

Henry Cabot Lodge in his *Washington*¹ contends that his hero and Lincoln had much in common. Unquestionably they had. In view of the fact that we are all human as much can be predicated of almost any two men. However, what impresses me about the twain is not their similarities but their differences. Washington was a gentleman by birth and his life long lived pretty much the life of an English country gentleman. Probably because he led a war of rebellion against a despotic monarchy and because he was the first president of a republic, there early was a widespread delusion in Europe generally that Washington was a democrat. Now, as a matter of fact, there was not a democratic hair on the man's head. Lincoln was a genuine democrat, a man of the people; Washington was an aristocrat to his very fingertips. Washington, furthermore, was a man of wealth; Lincoln, if not exactly born of "poor white trash" was born in direst poverty. I have just read Carl Sandburg's new life of Lincoln, which has come off the press this month. It is the most vivid picture of Lincoln's early years that I have yet seen. If you turn the pages you see Lincoln as pretty much of a country clown, which, I say it without irreverence, he remained more or less all his life. Lincoln lacked the dignity and the presence of our first President, but possessed something Washington never had. Lincoln had genius. I know others claim it for Wash-

¹) New York, 1889.

ington, but I must yet find the first trace of unmistakable genius in him. Lincoln had genius, in part at least because he possessed imagination, which Washington largely lacked. That is why Washington had little or no sense of humor.

Now, mark you, I am not denying, as some have done, greatness to Washington. How great a man he was you discover at once when you try to find among his contemporaries one man who could have filled his boots. There was none. Surely, there were more brilliant men, but not a single one of whom we feel sure that he could have filled his place. He was a man of the most dogged persistence, without which he could not have carried that long war of rebellion to the conclusion he did; he was a man of dauntless courage, and had, moreover, if you will permit me to use so hackneyed a phrase, the courage of his convictions. To deny him the genius Lincoln indubitably possessed is not to deny him greatness.

I happened to be in the city of Washington last summer. I had not been there for twenty years. I visited again, of course, the Washington monument. This time it occurred to me that there is something peculiarly appropriate about this memorial. Just as Washington towered above his contemporaries so this monument towers above the city bearing his name, and just as in Washington there was something of granite and of the coldness of granite, so this monument has been reared out of granite blocks. But, I asked myself, what is there peculiarly fitting about the

Lincoln memorial, a Greek temple reared in memory of a man as ungreek as man well can be. As I ascended the long flight of steps leading to the interior and saw before me the huge statue of Lincoln by French, and saw on one side in letters of gold the Second Inaugural and on the other the Gettysburg Address, it suddenly dawned upon me that after all there is something appropriate about the memorial. Lincoln possessed a beautiful soul, an artist's soul. He has left us immortal prose. There is nothing that Washington has written of which it would be safe to say that it will live. Only this winter his diary was published. I have not read it but I am told there are acres of aridity. I dare say it would never have been published had it been written by a lesser man. Of all that he wrote only his Farewell Address became at all familiar, and that because in it he warns against entangling alliances with Europe. However, if one of these days we should enter upon any such alliance, as it seems we may, and if there should be no untoward results, the Farewell Address, too, will pass into oblivion. But Lincoln has written things that can never die. You think at once of the Gettysburg Address, and you do well, but do not forget the Second Inaugural, which is not less beautiful and even more characteristic. And who can forget the letter to Mrs. Bixby who lost five sons on the battlefield? These addresses and this letter will live, not only because Lincoln wrote them, but because they are of imperishable beauty.

Attempts have been made to prove that the two men were devout Christians. So far as I have read them these efforts impress me as special pleading. However that may be, there is no question about this, both were God's gifts to the American people. The age of each was a most critical period in American history. God gave us Washington and Lincoln to lead us out of national darkness into national light. May they be an inspiration to us. Let us study their lives rather than read the realistic stuff that confronts us in every book shop.

In conclusion I may say that if you take time to study these men you will discover that the more you read about Washington the more you will admire him, the more you read about Lincoln the more you will love him.

NOTE—In connection with my reference to the Bixby letter it might be interesting to add the following: About the time the above words were spoken, Mr. Wm. E. Barton published his, *A Beautiful Blunder* (Indianapolis, 1926). So far as Mrs. Bixby and her sons are concerned the story becomes a sordid one. Mr. Barton sets forth that of Mrs. Bixby's five sons only two died in battle. The remaining three died natural deaths, of whom two, moreover, deserted from the army. Mrs. Bixby visited the office of the adjutant general of Massachusetts and prepared a list of the five sons and where they were killed. It was from the adjutant general that word of Mrs. Bixby's loss reached Lincoln which led him to write his now famous letter. All this, of course, in no wise detracts from the beauty of the letter itself.

VI

WILLIAM RINCK AS A COLLEAGUE

(IN MEMORIAM)

Massillon's famous funeral oration on the fourteenth Louis of France is, if I mistake not, fast passing into oblivion. For all I know deservedly so. However, one thing is certain: though men may forget the sermon as such, it will always be remembered for its opening sentence, "God only is great."

If I say that we shall do well to keep these opening words of Massillon in mind this evening, you may deem me guilty of an anticlimax. "Surely," you say, "the late Professor Rinck was no world-figure, but only a teacher in one small college among many." Very true, and yet the danger is by no means wholly imaginary that these memorial services, so well intended, may degenerate into the glorification of Professor Rinck instead of ascending into the magnification of his Maker.

Now that would be exceedingly regrettable, not only because nothing could more displease our late colleague, did he wot of it, but regrettable especially because it would be in flagrant violation of our fundamental conviction that only God is great, to Whom alone belongs all honor and all praise.

However, let me add in the same breath that for myself I am firmly convinced that in our extreme solicitude lest man receive any of the praise that belongs to his God, we have sometimes actually failed to give the Almighty His due. If it is good and proper to thank the Giver of every good gift for meat and drink, for raiment and shelter, for health and wealth, if it is our duty to number these blessings one by one, material blessings all, and to express our gratitude for them, shall we fail then to thank God for what He gave us in our Professor Rinck? Shall we not rather dwell upon the gifts of heart and mind with which his Maker so richly endowed him, not, indeed not, to glorify the creature, but to give the Creator all the praise?

It was in this spirit that this service was planned, and it is in this spirit, I know, that my associates would have me dwell briefly on the traits of colleague Rinck as we came to know him through the passing years. Should I fail in this, then I do not represent but misrepresent the Faculty, and the burden of blame is wholly mine.

I trust that I will be pardoned if I am very brief and leave much unsaid. All the more because Rinck was essentially a modest man, and I can not get away from the feeling that it would be something incongruous, something he himself would frown upon, were I to stand here extolling his virtues at much length. For, of course, and none knew it better than himself, Rinck was not perfect. When so great a saint as the holy apostle

Paul in agony of soul cries out: "I am carnal, sold under sin," "the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do," then, surely, for us ordinary mortals, of whom brother Rinck counted himself one, who fall so far short of the devotion, the consecration, the single-mindedness, the utter self-surrender of the chief of the apostles, for us, I say, there is nothing left but to humble ourselves in dust and ashes.

That our friend Rinck did this, that on this score he entertained no delusion, of that, my colleagues, neither you nor I have any doubt whatever.

But of Professor Rinck as a colleague, as a man among his fellows, I cannot, in all truthfulness, find anything of which to complain. Professor Vanden Bosch at the time of the funeral remarked that Rinck could at times be abrupt, brusque even. It is the simple truth and ought to be said. Yet, however this occasional brusqueness may have affected some student now and then, not knowing him as we did, I dare say it seldom if ever gave us, his associates, offense. We knew the man. We knew he said nothing in malice. We knew it to be a consequence of his forthrightness, his outspokenness, which was one of his outstanding traits.

A marked characteristic of Professor Rinck was his detestation of all circumlocution. I do not remember his ever going to Holland by way of Kalamazoo. If at faculty meetings one of us started on the more circuitous route, he might

lose all patience and refuse point-blank to go along. Again and again I have seen a warning frown gathering between his eyes, followed often by some such remark as this: "Mr. Chairman, the gentleman is talking beside the question." How often has he not, however, when we had enmeshed ourselves in a net of our own weaving, in his incisive, sententious way, delivered us from our tangle and started us once more toward the goal?

As a companion, who would desire a better? Cheerful, accommodating, willing always to bear his share of the burden and just a bit more, generous, kind, he was for his intimates a lovable man. And every inch there was of him he was a man, afraid of nobody, ever prepared to meet an opponent half way, and, on provocation, entirely willing to cross the line.

By common consent among us he had more than his share of executive talent. He was that *rara avis* among college teachers, a good business man. He might have his head in the clouds, for he was not devoid of ideals, especially for Calvin, but he never failed to keep both feet on the ground. Indeed, he possessed besides scholarship executive and administrative capacities of so high an order that had it not been for a certain handicap they would have made him excellent timber for a college presidency.

And how he loved Calvin, did he not? How he rejoiced that at last it was to be a college in fact as well as in name. How jealous he was of its

reputation. How he resisted the first step that might lead to a lowering of its standards.

Rinck was not a man who wore his heart on his sleeve, was not one to talk freely, for example, of his spiritual experiences, yet those of us who have been out with him all alone for a whole day's fishing say, could hardly fail to note the spiritual undercurrent that ran below the surface of his life.

Aye, my colleagues, shall we not, you and I, shall we not miss him? Long after he has become for the rapidly changing generations of students merely a name, we shall think of him with respect and affection. Even yet he speaks to us in his death, for I hear him say in his vigorous way: "Be prepared, be prepared!" Five wives of faculty members we carried to their graves during the fifteen years Professor Rinck was with us, but from out of our ranks he was the first. It requires no prophet to predict that before another fifteen years have passed some of us, we know not how many, neither who first, but some of us are destined to join the ranks of those who have gone before. Let us, therefore, labor while we may, and as we labor make sure we are prepared to meet the King.

God grant us if not another Rinck, which is almost more than we dare hope for, God grant us in his place a man of parts, as congenial in his companionship, as whole-souled in his devotion to this institution of Christian learning.

We thank God for what he gave us for fifteen

years in Professor Rinck and bring Him the glory and the praise.

In conclusion, may I not, in the name of my colleagues, ask you, Mrs. Rinck, who mourn your husband even more than your own flesh and blood; and you, Mr. Rinck, whose hairs have been silvered by the coming and going of the years undoubtedly, but also by the many sorrows that have swept over your head, of which the loss of this son is the crowning one; may I not ask you both to join us all, if you can, in repeating the moving lines of one of our poets:

“Open the gates of your heart and let him go,
The gates are high and the lock is hard, I know,
And, wistful, the anchors of home would faithfully hold
him fast, [but]
You must open the gates of your heart and let him go.
Master of death, and Lord of life, unto Thee
We open the gates of our heart and set him free.”

- VII

WORLDLINESS

Be not conformed to this world.
Romans 12:2a.

Is there a more fascinating story than that of the Christian Church? If you read it at all thoughtfully, and you need not read it too closely at that, you will soon discover that from its very beginning and throughout all the centuries since, the Church has had one inveterate, one consistent, persistent, implacable enemy — the devil. Were he not so abominably wicked and his schemes so utterly nefarious, one could hardly help but admire him, for he never knows when he is beaten, never gives up, never will give up until the bitter end.

Now what methods has satan employed in combating the progress of the Church? You will find it extremely interesting to study his strategy. His first method revealed rather astonishingly little insight, being such as might suggest itself to any novice. It was the heroic method of attempting to kill off every christian by fire and sword, in short, the method of persecution. If you know anything at all of the history of the early Church you know with what thoroughness this plan was tried. Looked at from the devil's viewpoint it proved a dismal failure. I do not know whether

at the time he comprehended the mathematics of it or not, I doubt that he did, but what happened was that every time he killed off one christian he had two or three or more new ones on his hands. The more he persecuted the Church the more it thrived, until eventually even the devil realized that it was more than time to resort to some other scheme.

The fight was not abandoned. Oh, no. This is not an eighty years but a millennial war. The devil only changed his tactics. He resorted now to a subtler method, or, rather, to a subtle method, his first not being subtle at all but that of the bludgeon; and now he came perilously near succeeding, as near succeeding as probably he ever will. He resorted to a complete change of tactics. By his first scheme he made Christianity unpopular but now he made it fashionable, quite the correct thing you know, even going so far as to make membership in the Church a requirement for public office. With what effect? With for the Church absolutely disastrous effect. By persecuting the Church he had kept out of it the world which now took possession of it. Persecution refined the Church, drained off the dross and left the pure gold; but now the world not only found entrance into the Church but speedily conquered it. The Church became worldly, so worldly that hundreds, even thousands, fled, fled not merely from the world, but from the world in the Church.

I cannot go into details. Again and again efforts were made to reclaim the Church. All to

no avail. Everything seemed to be playing into satan's hands when suddenly he received a rude awakening. A simple monk in an out of the way German town posted some theses on a church door, and as much to the devil's surprise as his own spoiled all the former's cherished plans. If you have read Luther at all, or read about him, you know how often and how bitterly he complains of being molested by the evil one. At one time I was inclined to believe that Luther rather overworked the devil, but I have come to the conclusion that he exaggerated not at all. You must remember that it was especially Luther who spoiled the devil's broth and roused his fury. How angry he was is best evidenced by the fact that he completely lost his head. Had he not done so, surely, he would not have returned to a discarded method — persecution. Once more he essayed to destroy the Church by killing off its last adherent. In the Netherlands alone thousands were done to death. I spent a morning in the "Nieuwe Gevangenis" in the Hague. I was shown all manner of instruments of torture that were used during the reign of terror instituted by the Spanish Inquisition. When I saw the hellish ingenuity that had been expended on devising these contrivances cold chills ran up and down my spine. However, our fathers stood the test, Protestantism survived, and persecution once again demonstrated its utter futility.

What now about today? Has satan given up the battle or is he still active? How about our

own Church? Is satan active among us endeavoring to rob us of our crown?

I venture to predict that a future historian of our Church, say a hundred years hence, will say that in our day there was among us too much dead orthodoxy. Dead orthodoxy is devitalized christianity, a christianity characterized by adherence to sound doctrine with indifference to sound living: an absolutely disastrous condition, for if such orthodoxy is worth anything at all it can never long maintain itself. The whole situation would remind a chemist of the process called spontaneous combustion, a process due to a rise in temperature resulting from oxidation, which in turn still more elevates the temperature, and so on until finally you get a flame. So indifference to christian living breeds indifference to christian doctrine, which in turn intensifies indifference to christian living until eventually you have lost both.

Orthodoxy that has lost its vitality leads to worldliness, manifesting itself in our dress, in theatre going, dancing, sabbath desecration, and in who knows how many other ways. There is no question in my mind that these practices are disastrous to a genuine spirituality. Let me, however, warn those of you who shun worldly amusements that one can even so be very worldly. I know of a man who is a church member in good standing, never misses a service if he can help it, is never seen where christians should not be seen, lives, so far as I know, in the odor of sanctity,

and yet, it seems to me, is utterly worldly. When I meet him occasionally I never, Sunday or week-day, hear him speak of anything but houses, lands, rents, crops, business, money, and things, and things, and things. If that is not worldly I do not know what worldliness is. I do not mention this to justify attendance upon worldly amusements, certainly not, but I do not want anyone to leave this hall in smug complacency simply because he has never seen the inside of a theatre. Remember the christian refrains indeed from various practices because they are worldly, but this refraining does not make him a christian. Nowhere and never does the Bible say, "show me thy faith by what thou doest not," but, "show me thy faith by what thou doest."

Worldliness is dangerous. How can we best rid ourselves of it? Not by not doing things. Christianity is not something negative but positive. If you are going to places or doing things you should not, stop today, but do not flatter yourself that by such refraining you can become a christian. Never. How then combat worldliness? Listen, suppose you go home by and by and find the house full of foul air. What will you do? Pump the bad air out? Of course not. You will simply open the windows wide and let the fresh air in. Worldliness is not something external though it manifests itself externally; it is in the heart. Manifestly, this being the case, the one and only way to get worldliness out of your heart is to open it wide and let God in. In proportion

as you allow God to take possession of your heart just in that proportion will you drive worldliness out. There is no other method. Will you not let Him enter your heart and take complete possession of it? Will you not take this from me in all kindness and act upon it? Worldliness threatens us today, and is for the Church a far more insidious danger than persecution ever was or ever will be.

VIII

THE WAGES OF SIN. I.

The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Romans 6:23.

Not long since I read for the second time George Eliot's *Romola*. I had read it once before in my boyhood when it was rather beyond me. Now, I know as well as you do, that it is the fashion today to sneer, or at least to smile superciliously, at the Victorians. George Eliot, too, is in eclipse. *Romola*, nevertheless, in my opinion, which you may take for what it is worth, is a remarkable book, and that for two reasons: First, it is a fine historical romance, better than much of Scott, quite as good as Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*, though probably not up to the mark, a very high mark indeed, of Scheffel's *Ekkehard*. What a vivid picture *Romola* gives you of the Italian Renaissance, especially — the Renaissance being as many-sided as Leonardo and Michaelangelo themselves — especially, I say, of its political and social aspect. Here you have pictured for you the turbulence of the Renaissance, its Machiavellian duplicity, and the sharp wits required to divine — and your very life depended on the cor-

rectness of your divination — who would be on top tomorrow.¹⁾

That *Romola* so realistically represents the daily life of the Florentinians of that distant day is its first but not its greatest merit. There is a second and greater. It would seem that George Eliot deems *Romola* the chief character of the book, and I dare say many readers agree with her, yet that is undoubtedly an error. But, surely, you would say, who better than the author of a book knows who constitutes its principal character? Well, I for one believe that the critical reader is a better judge of this than the writer himself. Not *Romola* but *Tito*, *Tito Mellema* is the principal person in the story. And is he not a wonderful product of the creative imagination? The late President Hyde of Bowdoin College in his, *From Epicurus to Christ*,¹⁾ says that *Tito Mellema* is a full-length portrait of an epicurean. Hyde is wrong. *Tito* is more than that. He is no mere painting. Only shortly before his sudden death I saw the very fine portrait of the late bishop Kelly by Alten. It is, I believe, an excellent creation of Alten's brush, but like every other painting it represents and can only represent the bishop

¹⁾ I am not ignorant of the fact that there are those who deny that *Romola* gives a realistic picture of the Renaissance in Florence. However, I am happy to find myself in excellent company. Read, for example, the article on George Eliot in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and especially, too, Sir A. W. Ward's very fine appreciation in vol. 13, of the *Camb. Hist. of Eng. Lit.*

¹⁾ New York, 1904, p. 46.

at a certain age and in a certain mood. It is static. But George Eliot's Tito Mellema is dynamic, it is not at all, as Hyde asserts, a portrait of an epicurean, he is an epicurean, he is a living, throbbing, pulsating human being, quick and not dead. When first you meet him in the book he is a charming, amiable, likable young fellow. It is no cause for surprise that Romola loves him. Who would not? But as the days, and the weeks, and the months, and the years roll by, under your very eyes the fibre of his soul coarsens until this wholly charming young man deteriorates into a contemptible scoundrel. It strikes one as wholly logical that he should come to the violent end he does.

Indeed, the wages of sin is death. It is so with Tito. He is a man without principle, lives for nothing but pleasure be it at first of a refined sort, follows the line of least resistance, drifts with the current like a dead fish, cannot say no, succumbs to every temptation, and ends by becoming an utter cur.

Tito is dead. Is he? No, Tito lives. There are hundreds and thousands of him today. Unless I am a very poor judge of human nature there are some Titos right here at Calvin. Young men and young women who put pleasure before duty, and who allow themselves to be led and misled by the first comer.

I warn you if you make pleasure your god like

every other idol it will fail you in the end, and too late you will discover what the wage of sin is.

May I, however, before closing call your attention to the remaining clause in this last verse of Romans six? What a startling juxtaposition of thought: First, "the wages of sin is death," but then, praise be to God, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Wages is what we earn. We have earned death. Life we cannot earn but God is willing to give it us of his free grace if we plead for it on the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

What this passage teaches us in a nut shell then is this: serve sin and you die; serve God and you live, live forever.

IX

THE WAGES OF SIN. II.

O my son Absalom, my son, my
son Absalom! Would God I had died
for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

II Samuel 18:33.

My father though possessing a deep fund of emotion ordinarily was a calm man, but I well remember once in my childhood hearing him read the story of which the verse I have read is the climax, and becoming so possessed by the stark tragedy of it all that he had much difficulty in finishing the chapter. His emotion was too obvious to escape even a child, and though I did not fully grasp the situation at the time ever since this already moving passage has for me an added poignancy. Beyond cavil there are few incidents in Scripture that stir one so deeply. Why? Did not Absalom reap only what he had sown? In cold blood, with every demagogic wile that an evidently cunning mind could suggest, he first weaned the people away from his royal father centering their affections upon himself, and then when he deemed the opportune hour had struck started open rebellion, open rebellion against an indulgent father who had bestowed upon this son special favors. An unnatural son was Absalom, an in-

grate, one of the most despicable characters in Scripture.

Under Joab's skillful leadership the rebellion failed, the arch-plotter lay dead, and those loyal to the king rejoiced. Imagine their consternation and Joab's ire when they saw how the death of the son affected the father. So far from rejoicing David drearily paces the floor moaning over and over, "O Absalom, my son, my son!" The people were puzzled. And if Joab was harsh it was not without cause. Yet you and I so long after the event are not at all mystified. David's behavior was so altogether human that we understand at once, and understanding not only pardon but even to a certain extent justify. Think of it, a favorite but wayward son struck down not only in open revolt against an indulgent father, but what in David's eyes was vastly worse, in revolt against God's own anointed. You know how David abhorred that. Said he not to Abishai, "The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed"? Though Saul hunted him like "a partridge in the mountains," and though again and again David might have taken Saul's life with little risk to his own, never once however sorely tempted did he lift his hand against his sovereign. Yet here none other than his own begotten attempts this very thing, in the attempt meets death and falls into the hands of the living God. David, overwhelmed with grief, forgets all else, forgets to thank God for the great deliverance, forgets the loyalty of his faithful followers, the

services of his captains, the crown that has been preserved for him; remembers only Absalom once so handsome and so promising now lying cold in death, the death of the ungodly. How natural the, "O Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee."

I remember reading in my boyhood the story of some great prophet who went from city to city working miracles. Since he never refused a petition, people crowded around him. However, a petition was never otherwise granted than conditionally, the condition often being of such a character that the petitioner preferred not to enter upon it. Thus, for example, a man who asked for wealth might be told he could have it but only at the expense of health. One day there came to the prophet an aged mother begging for the life of an only son who lay at death's door. The prophet looked upon her and said: "Woman, I can spare the life of thy son only at the expense of thine own. Art agreed?" "Aye, gladly," replied the woman, well content.

Just this was David's attitude — "would God I had died for thee." David knew in whom he believed. Oh, indeed, he had most grievously sinned against a holy God, he knew that, none better than he, he knew too that right now he was plucking the bitter fruit of all this iniquity, but he knew also that all these his sins had been forgiven, and, therefore, how gladly would he not have died that this his son might live and have opportunity to repent. Surely, there is excuse for Joab's harsh

reprimand of the king, but though Joab saw it not you and I can see how altogether human was David's conduct.

Some of you may remember that two years ago one morning I spoke to you on, "the wages of sin is death." Here you have the proof. For Absalom it meant death in the fullest sense of the word, for David an agony transcending any mere physical dissolution. Be not deceived. We cannot escape the consequences of sin, even God's own cannot in this world. Sin always finds us out, if not today then tomorrow, if not this year then next, if not in youth then in middle life. Flee sin as you would the plague, even more than the plague for it is vastly more to be dreaded.

X

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

Who being in the form of God . . .
took upon Him the form of a servant.
Phil. 2:6, 7.

What makes Christmas Christmas? Is this a foolish question? I do not think so. Certainly the replies one hears to the question from people around us are not identical. For you students, for example, Christmas means vacation, the merry Christmas holidays. I remember as if it were yesterday that on an exactly similar occasion my former colleague, B. K. Kuiper, many years ago, pictured for us in his inimitable way the Christmas home-going and home-coming of a freshman. So long as any of my colleagues who were present then are still beside me I shall attempt nothing of the kind. Whatever else Christmas may mean this at least Christmas means for you — vacation. I hear it in your voices, I see it in your faces.

But how about others? No sooner is Thanksgiving past but our newspapers fill from cover to cover with Christmas advertisements, and your Jew, though the very name of our beloved Saviour is odious to him, shouts as raucously as any gentile, Christmas, Christmas. And hear him the day after Christmas: "Good morning, Einstein, did you have a good Christmas?" "Fine," replies

Einstein, "sold everything on my shelves." So that is Christmas, is it? Business, profits, money. Again, listen to Mrs. Smith as she meets Mrs. Brown on Christmas day: "Did you have a good Christmas Mrs. Brown?" "Just splendid," Mrs. Brown assures her, "I received more gifts than I could count." What makes Christmas Christmas? Is it the presents which people "exchange"? Does Christmas mean things?

Do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that a Christian must lock up shop during the holidays and refuse to sell. Neither do I say that we may not give each other gifts on Christmas day. Far be it from me. On the contrary I consider this giving of gifts, provided we do not restrict it to our friends from whom we can expect an equivalent in return, an altogether beautiful custom. Who among us has not derived from it the keenest and most justifiable pleasure?

These things, however, should not constitute for us the meaning of Christmas; they should always remain secondary. What makes Christmas Christmas is stated in our text of this morning: "Who being in the form of God . . . took upon Him the form of a servant." I know not how much or how little St. Paul knew of Aristotle, but this I know that in this passage he is using an Aristotelian term; furthermore, unless we are familiar with Aristotle's use of it the passage cannot but be incomprehensible. What does Paul mean when

he speaks of Jesus being in the *form* of God, and assuming the *form* of a servant? Does he mean that in the last analysis Jesus was neither human nor divine, that Jesus had only the form, that is, the appearance of both? Precisely this Paul does not mean. Paul is trying to say, and once you understand him does say in the most emphatic manner possible, that Jesus was truly human and yet at the same time very God of very God.

Here is the explanation. When Aristotle speaks of the form of a thing he means that which makes that thing that thing, means, that is to say, what we call the "specific character" of an object as distinguished from what the philosopher calls its "accidents." What, for example, makes a hat a hat? Its color? Texture? Fashion? Age? Price? No, all these are mere "accidents." What makes a hat a hat is that it has a crown and brim, and this last, according to Aristotle, is the "form" of the hat.

So then, when St. Paul says in our text that Jesus was in the form of God he asserts with the last emphasis that he is God Himself, just as he asserts with equal emphasis, when he says that Jesus took upon Him the form of a servant, that he became as human as you or I.

Here then, in this very text, we have the only correct answer to the question, what makes Christmas Christmas, what is the meaning of Christmas? The form of Christmas, if I may use

the Aristotelian-Pauline term, is that the Word became flesh, is the fact of the incarnation. While my colleagues join with me in wishing you a most pleasant vacation, they also hope with me that in all the hustle and bustle of the holidays you will not lose sight of the one fact that gives its real meaning to this gladsome season.

XI

OF WHOM I AM CHIEF

Christ Jesus came into the world
to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

I Tim. 1:15.

There is no more fascinating *genre* of letters, especially for the student of human nature, than that which we may call confessional. Of these books none are better known than the *Confessions* of St. Augustine and Jean Jacques Rousseau's book under the same title. To the same category belong certain other books whose character may not be indicated by their titles, as, for example, the *Historia Calamitatum* of Abelard, one of the most moving documents of the Middle Ages; the *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* of John Bunyan, among confessional books one of the most interesting; the *Apologia pro vita sua* of Newman, a rare book, by common consent a masterly literary portrait shot through with the most candid self-criticism; and *The Life and Confessions of a Psychologist* by Stanley Hall, between the lines of which one who has known Hall can read as much of repression as of confession in the text. Here, too, belong some frank fragments of Luther who had one of those outspoken minds so indispensable to one who is to reveal his inmost self. Benvenuto Cellini's autobiography belongs here because of its

remarkable candor. So does Pepys' *Diary* and for the same reason. No Cellini, no not even a Rousseau could be more outspoken than was Samuel Pepys in his famous *Diary*, and that not because he was shameless as were they, but simply because he never intended the book, which was written in a form of shorthand that practically amounted to cipher, to be read by other eyes than his own. A good deal of fiction is, of course, confessional in character. No man can write a novel like Herman Sudermann's, *Der tolle Professor*,¹⁾ without revealing that from which one is justified in inferring much as to the author's life and character. After wading through the morass of this book I was prepared for what I found in the same writer's, *Das Bilderbuch meiner Jugend*,²⁾ which belongs in the same category as Cellini's and should be mentioned here. Lastly, possibly one should mention such a medley of truth and fiction as Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.

I do not offer this as an exhaustive list of books of this kind. Of diaries alone — which when frank are of the nature of confessions — there is no end. Gamaliel Bradford in his, *The Soul of Samuel Pepys*,³⁾ gives a very interesting review of the main types of them. No, I mention only those with which I may claim some familiarity.

In reading this literature one stands amazed

1) Stuttgart, 1926.

2) Stuttgart, 1922.

3) Cambridge, 1924, p. 14 ff.

at the difference between such manifestly truthful self-revelation as the *Confessions* of Augustine, or the *Grace Abounding* of Bunyan, or certain passages in Luther on the one hand, and the *Confessions* of Rousseau, or the *Diary* of Pepys on the other. They are as far apart as East and West. Of all confessions only those of Augustine and of Rousseau, each representing a class, can be mentioned in quite the same breath. Cellini's autobiography, for example, cannot be placed on the same line as Rousseau's book. It is a wonderful picture of the late Italian Renaissance, and I dare say deserves the high praise of the famous English historian of the Renaissance, John Addington Symonds, who in the introduction to his excellent English translation of the book asserts that it is one of the three or four greatest autobiographies of all time; but while it is candid beyond belief it is almost wholly a record of passions and deeds, Cellini not being at all given to self-analysis. Symonds is correct when he says in the same introduction: "The man presents himself dramatically by his deeds and spoken words, never by his ponderings or meditative broodings. It is this healthy externality which gives its great charm to Cellini's self-portrayal and renders it an imperishable document for the student of human nature." If from the standpoint of self-revelation Cellini's book does not attain to the level of Rousseau's, neither do those of Hall or Goethe; no more, on the other hand, can the accounts of Abelard, or Bunyan, or even Newman attain to the

rank of Augustine's book. Abelard, for example, deeply humiliated though he unquestionably was and felt himself to be, never descended into the introspective depths of his sinful self in such thoroughgoing fashion as did Augustine, and whilst Bunyan in this respect stands second to none, not even Augustine or St. Paul himself, he lacks the intellectual greatness of Augustine and does not begin to approach him in profundity of psychological insight.⁴⁾

So far as Pepys is concerned I confess I am at a loss as to just where to place him. Though he died in the odor of sanctity some thirty years after making the last entry in his *Diary*, he cer-

⁴⁾ None other than Adolph Harnack in his *Augustins Konfessionen*, third edition, Giessen, 1908, p. 9, says in resounding German: "Er beobachtet die geheimsten Regungen seines eigenen Herzens; er folgt dem zarten Weben und dem mächtigen Wogen seiner Gefühle. Er kennt alle Ausflüchte und Schlichwege, auf welchen der Mensch seinem Gott und seiner höchsten Bestimmung zu entfliehen strebt.

And on p. 8, Harnack says: "Denn was enthalten die Konfessionen Augustins? ein Seelengemälde, nicht psychologische Abhandlungen über Verstand, Wille und Gefühl im Menschen, nicht abstrakte Untersuchungen über die Seele, nicht oberflächliches Raisonement und moralisierende Selbstbespiegelung wie die Tagebuchblätter Marc Aurels, sondern die genaueste Schilderung eines bestimmten Menschen, eines Individuums in seiner entwicklung von der Kindheit bis zum Mannesalter mit allen seiner Trieben, Gefühlen, Zielen und Irrungen, ein Seelengemälde, mit einer ausbündigen Kunst der Beobachtung gezeichnet, welche die gewöhnlichen Hülsen und Schablonen der Psychologie bei seite lässt und der Methode des Physiologen und Arztes folgt.

tainly was no saint during the decade covered by the book. He is just as frank as Augustine and Rousseau, indeed, we are told by a Harvard professor that "his work is not mere frankness; it is self-revelation at its highest power — there is nothing more to tell,"⁵⁾ but he never possessed during the *Diary* days either Augustine's lively sense of guilt or Rousseau's utter shamelessness. He may belong in a class by himself.

Only the confessions of Augustine and of Rousseau remain, therefore, for comparison. The two are fundamentally alike and fundamentally different. In a library they should stand side by side on the same shelf, but, too, they should stand as far apart as the shelving will permit. They are alike in their outspokenness. Rousseau confesses everything, Augustine nearly everything. But when it comes to character and motives the two men are antipodal. Somebody, I forget who, once said that to turn from Augustine's book to that of Rousseau is much like passing from a room of Titians or Michaelangelos into a room containing nothing but paintings by Frans Hals or Jan Steen.

If the two books are alike in their frankness they differ in that where you find in Augustine an overwhelming sense of guilt and shame you find Rousseau thinking of himself as essentially innocent and good. Both books glorify somebody, but

⁵⁾ Abbott, Wilbur C., *Conflicts with Oblivion*, New Haven, 1924, p. 15.

while Augustine like Bunyan extols the sublime mercy of God who takes pity on so great a sinner, Rousseau aims no higher than the glorification of self.

In other words, Augustine, as do Luther and Bunyan and every other true child of God, protests with the writer of the Scripture passage I have just read: "Of whom I am chief." Truly these are startling words if you consider who utters them. Is it Judas Iscariot who foully betrayed the Master? Or is it Simon Peter who thrice cravenly denied Him? Neither. It is none other than the holy apostle Paul, even in his unregenerate days a pharisee of the pharisees keeping the letter of the law, now chief of the apostles. Is he possibly speaking rhetorically? No, he means literally what he says. Contrast with this Rousseau. On the basis of his own testimony he stands convicted, — a degenerate, one of the most despicable of men. Yet when he reaches the end of his long and shameful story he solemnly declares that, well, yes, possibly he has done a thing or two that might better have been left undone, but all things considered he has been a good man. Is he jesting? Is his tongue in his cheek? Not at all. He is as much in earnest as any Paul, or Augustine, or Luther, or Bunyan.

How account for so amazing a contrast? It is not difficult if you stop to think. Listen. Paul, like every other child of God, has caught a glimpse of the spotless, the immaculate holiness of the Divine Being. Comparing himself with this he

sees himself sin stained from head to foot, it can not be that others are worse, it can not be that others are half so bad as he, it cannot be otherwise of all sinners he must be chief. It is with him as with Bunyan who thought his sin "was bigger than the sins of a country, of a Kingdom, or of the whole world." ⁶⁾ But Jean Jacques compares himself not with God but with man. And that is fatal. Scarcely can man sink so low but he can find one lower, indeed, even the very lowest can still point to the devil as worse than himself. Doubtless, vile though he was, Rousseau could find among his fellows others more degraded than even he, especially in his own eyes.

Be warned. Cease comparing yourself with others to your own advantage as did the pharisee of Jesus' parable, and as we are so prone to do today; enter into the presence of God and you will cry out with the publican of old, "God be merciful to me a sinner," you will cry out with one of the chiefest of sinners,

"Come down, O Christ, and help me!
reach Thy hand,
For I am drowning in a stormier sea
Than Simon on Thy lake of Galilee." ⁷⁾

But then, too, our Lord will say of you as He did of the publican, "this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." Not, mark you, because you have measured, or even because

⁶⁾ *Grace Abounding*, par. 172.

⁷⁾ Oscar Wilde in his *E Tenebris*.

you have begun to measure the depth of your unworthiness. Even Paul did not.

“Alack, thou knowest not
How little worthy of any love thou art!
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,
Save Me, save only Me?”⁸

My message on this occasion a year ago was based on a passage in one of Paul's other epistles, that to the Philippians, the verses six and seven of chapter two, which read thus: “Who being in the form of God took upon Him the form of a servant,” a passage which emphasizes the fact of the incarnation. As you notice my text of today answers the age-old question, the question of Anselm, why did God become man? Why? “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” It is just this that gave meaning to the incarnation, is it not? But have you already attained to Paul's conclusion — of whom I am chief? Our *Heidelberg Catechism*, you will remember, begins by asking what we must know if we are to live and die happily, and it replies that the first thing we must know is how great our sins and miseries are. Precisely. In proportion as we realize this and have found forgiveness with Him born in Bethlehem, in just that proportion shall we be able to celebrate Christmas aright.

My colleagues join me in wishing you a thrice happy holiday. May our chief joy be that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, including even ourselves.

⁸) Francis Thompson in his *Hound of Heaven*.

XII

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW

A good many years ago now Max Stirner wrote a godless book under the title, *Der Einziger und Sein Eigenthum*. Whatever one may say of the book at least this much of it is true, we are all *Einzigers*, we are all unique, every last one of us. For better for worse there is none other quite like me, none other quite like you. That is why we have each our own peculiar outlook upon life. Our uniqueness and our consequently unique view of life is determined by many factors that I cannot even begin to enumerate, but of which I shall mention just a few of the most important.

There is, for example, age. The child does not see life as does the boy, the boy not as the youth, the youth not as the mature man, and the latter not as the senescent gray-beard fast approaching dotage. The difference, however, cannot be due so much to the mere passing of the years as to what has gone into those years.

Experience, then, is a factor and one of the most important. Imagine two men both fifty years of age, alike in every respect save their experience of life, well, you may be sure they will view it differently. Especially the tragedies of life, especially, too, the tragedies produced by death profoundly modify our attitude towards life. You cannot enter the valley of the shadow

with a beloved wife, or husband, or child, and return alone, without seeing life differently ever after.

Health and disease have a profound influence. The gloom of the dyspeptic is notorious. Even passing indispositions color one's whole view of life. Whether you get up in the morning with a brown taste in your mouth, or feeling, as the Germans say, *zum Bäumen ausreissen*, makes all the difference in the world in your attitude towards life.

Again, one's temperament is a big factor. Some people are temperamental optimists, inclined to see the bright side of life; others are temperamental pessimists, who cannot see the silver lining that encircles so many a cloud.

One could continue. There are many other elements, the most important of all being religion. The Christian and the unbeliever cannot possibly see life alike, a fact that is brought out beautifully in one of the most interesting books of the year that has just passed, *Fear*, written not by some theologian but by a practicing physician.¹⁾

Now all these factors which determine your outlook upon life also determine how you pass out of an old year into a new. I have difficulty, for example, in understanding how a mature Christian — I am willing to make some allowance for youth — can pass out of one year into another

¹⁾ Oliver, John R., *Fear—The Autobiography of James Edwards*, N. Y., 1927.

hilariously. Certainly he cannot do so without subsequent heartache. I remember noticing in my boyhood that my father was unusually grave on old year's day, neither, since he possessed an exceptionally transparent nature, did it take me long to divine the reason. His gravity was due to his profound dissatisfaction with himself, with his achievements of the year, with the sins that had marred each passing day. Though in less transparent natures others may not discover the fact so readily, it seems to me that no earnest Christian can close a year in any other way.

Just how we enter a new year will depend on numerous factors. If one has had much experience of life, be the number of one's years comparatively few or many, there is bound to be a very serious undercurrent. It cannot be otherwise. I begin the new year, shall I live to see its close? Will death this year invade my home or will he pass it by? What will the new year bring us? The old year is an open book. Its pages I can turn in memory and read all that happened. I know not only the best, I know the worst. But the new year is a volume sealed, only God can open it, and its pages only He can turn.

And yet and still there is about New Year's day an unmistakable atmosphere of cheer. Why is this? The answer is simple. It is because we human beings are incurably hopeful. Whatever the past may have brought us, whatever of disease, or pain, or disillusionment, or mortification,

we hope the coming year will bring joy and success. This is just as true of the Christian as of the non-Christian. Oh, surely, he is profoundly dissatisfied with his past performance as a Christian, but he begins the new year with new aspirations and new resolutions saying with Saint Paul, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after if that I may apprehend." ²⁾

And now, in conclusion, I am going into no details. I might urge you and do urge you if you have neglected to write diligently to your parents to begin doing so right now. You owe it to them. I might and do urge you to resolve that you will be diligent in attending upon divine worship, diligent in pursuing your studies, diligent in many other things, but I prefer not to go into particulars. Do what Paul did, follow after perfection if that you may apprehend.

My colleagues of the Faculty unite with me in wishing you a happy New Year. May the Lord bless thee and keep thee: make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: lift His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

²⁾ Phil. 3: 12.

XIII

APPRECIATION

I once heard one of your teachers in the College, and therefore one of my colleagues, preach a sermon on this poignant passage of Scripture, "Remember not the sins of my youth." "What," asked he, "are the sins, what is *the* sin of youth?" He then proceeded to enumerate this, that, and another sin commonly considered characteristic of youth, and came to the conclusion that *the* sin of youth is lack of appreciation. I confess that for a moment this came to me as an anticlimax. He had been enumerating grievous sins and the conclusion seemed somewhat lame. However, he was undoubtedly correct. Failure to appreciate what parents, teachers, elders, ministers, God Himself are doing and have done for us, that is *the* sin of youth; only, failure to appreciate, while undoubtedly in a peculiar sense the sin of youth, is not the sin of youth alone but of mankind. It is man's great sin. It is at the bottom of man's colossal ingratitude, and that in face of the fact that God requires just that of us, gratitude, and in face of the fact that it is appreciation that is the great lubricant of life. Parents will sacrifice for their children, teachers will toil for their pupils, ministers will toil for their flocks, appreciation or none; but how much easier all this sacrifice and toil becomes when it is valued. And still how

chary we are, are we not, how positively stingy we oft times are with our appreciation. Often the first word of unstinted praise that is given a man comes when he lies deaf in death. Then, when there is none to hear, or, at least, when he who should have heard can no longer hear, then we come with our tribute of praise.

Yet, true though this may be, it is not of this that I wish to speak to you this last evening. I have quite a different message for you. Soon now, either this fall or a little later, you will, the Lord sparing you, pass into active life. Let me caution you against working for appreciation. In the first place, that is not the way to get it. The old Greek philosophers already taught us that if you desire happiness you must not seek it. It is, in the words of Jesus, one of the things "added." It is precisely the same with appreciation. He who makes it the aim of life will not attain it. But there is a much deeper reason. Do you know that I am profoundly suspicious of the man who complains loud and often that his work is not sufficiently esteemed? Such a man has, I fear, a wholly exaggerated notion of himself. Indeed, I believe that the chronic complainer of lack of appreciation is not, however often that much-abused word may cross his lips, a Calvinist at all, certainly he is not a good Calvinist, thinks far too much of his own glory, far too little of the glory of God.

Let me this once yet advise you. Give little thought to whether men praise you or no. It is

not a matter of indifference, but in the last analysis it does not make a particle of difference what men think of you, the question is what does God think of you. Be a true Christian, go about your duty as a true Christian, and I promise you, nay, who am I to promise, God promises you that appreciation will come, come often already in this life, but, if not, why whine about not being valued at your true worth, for the day is coming when the great Appreciator will say to you — and, deeply conscious as you will be in that solemn hour of your own unworthiness, it will sound almost unbelievable in your ears — will say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Is not that appreciation enough?

XIV

TWO PROVERBS

I doubt if there is a more quotable book than one of our very oldest — Solomon's *Proverbs*. Of its many apt and pithy sayings two are so linked in my memory that when I think of the one I am more than likely to think of the other, not because of similarity, neither because of contiguity in the text, but rather because of what our older psychologists used to call the law of contrary association. Of these proverbs the first is, "the slothful man saith, there is a lion in the way."¹)

Our Bible was written not by Mark Twain, neither by Bill Nye, nor by Mr. Dooley, but, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, by serious-minded men for serious-minded people. It is not a book of humor. Yet there is humor in the Bible, more humor than most people realize. I have, for example, seen people read right over the proverb I just quoted without even the hint of a smile. Now that is more than I can understand. So far as Solomon is concerned I am pretty well convinced that when he wrote the proverb there was, indeed, a look of withering scorn in his one eye for nobody before or since ever hated laziness with so deadly a hatred; but there was, I doubt not, a twinkle in the other eye. Do you know

¹) Proverbs 26: 13.

that once when I was all alone in my study and this proverb popped into my consciousness from who knows where, I sat back in my chair and laughed out loud? It is so funny. Just stop to think. Here is some lazy loafer who has already exhausted every possible excuse for not going to work and now says: "I do not believe I will go to work this morning. You see, one can never tell, there might be a lion in the way." If that is not funny, what is?

Of course, the language is that of an oriental. Our own lazy Slokins would probably say something like this: "Do you know, Eliza, I do not believe I will look for work this morning. I heard tell only yesterday that several thousand people are killed annually by automobiles in the United States alone. I might get run down and killed." Well, I fear I shall shock some of you, but I assure you that whatever might be true of Eliza's husband far worse things might happen to her than that he should get killed. You need be no sociologist to know that ever and again some family is far more prosperous and far happier after the death of a perfectly able-bodied husband and father than before.

The second proverb associated in my mind with that already mentioned is this: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business he shall stand before kings." ²⁾ How beautifully simple. Even a child can get its meaning. As you know the high-

²⁾ Proverbs 22: 29.

est honor that could come to any citizen in ancient times was to receive an invitation to appear before the king. It is even so today. Do you want to see some Hollander or Englishman swell with pride before your very eyes, watch him when he gets an invitation to court. Watch your American who is invited to the White House. What Solomon means to say is not, of course, that every diligent Hollander shall stand before the Queen, or every diligent American before the President, no, but that each in his own sphere, be it ever so limited, shall come to honor and dignity. And that is true, always has been, always will be. Just look about you.

Now, I would not for one moment convey the impression that you graduates more than others who have gone before need to be warned against slothfulness. Not at all, but I speak of these things because I am sure William James was right when he said that most men never even begin to tap their layers of reserve energy. Most of us can do more than we think. What I say to you I say to all, including myself, let us be diligent in our business lest when the King come he find us, if not sleeping, possibly half asleep on the job. Mr. Roosevelt once said, and I used to think of it as one of his happiest epigrams, that the only man who never makes a mistake is the man who never does anything; but recently it dawned upon me that it was one of Roosevelt's big mistakes, for the man who never does anything so far from

making no mistake makes the biggest mistake of all. I can prove it. Once upon a time a man went into a far country, leaving with one servant five talents, with another two, with another one. Upon his return he questioned each servant as to what he had done with the treasure entrusted to him, and this is what the servant with the one talent replied: "My Lord, I once heard a man say that the only man who never makes a mistake is the man who never does anything. Knowing that thou art a hard man, and being fearful lest I make a mistake I hid thy talent in the ground. Lo, here is what is thine." And what did his Lord say unto him? Did he say, "well done, thou good and cautious servant?" I trow not. No, he said, "cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness."

Be diligent, above all be diligent in the King's business, for then one day you shall stand without fear and without trembling before the King, the King of kings.

XV

HUMILITY

Be clothed with humility.

I Peter 5:5.

This is *your* commencement day. Upon this happy but also solemn occasion I urge you in the language of one of the greatest of the apostles, "be clothed with humility." Now I know what some of you, or at least some in this audience are thinking, namely, "could the man after diligent search find a subject less appropriate?" If he wishes to base his remarks on some passage of Scripture why not on, "quit you like men," or one of scores of others that would lend themselves beautifully to the occasion? Of all injunctions what could be worse than to say to young men and young women about to enter upon active life, "be clothed with humility"? It is not only preposterous, it is unconscionable.

Well, I am not unmindful of possible and even probable criticism. I am well aware, too, that your average commencement orator would avoid advice of this kind as a mariner would a coral reef. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that, whether I do justice to my theme or no, it would scarcely be possible to find better advice for students about to graduate from college than just this. "Be clothed with humility," genuine not false humility,

which, of course, is not humility at all, but something which while masquerading as such really is pride in disguise, a very flimsy disguise at that. Of such a falsely humble man Socrates once said: "Diogenes, I see your pride through the holes in your cloak." Nobody likes a conceited man, but as compared with the falsely humble, the Uriah Heeps, the frankly conceited are positively adorable.

What is humility? Is it equivalent to modesty? So it would seem if you consult the dictionaries, but I sense a very real and a very profound distinction. As contrasted with conceit, which denotes cherishing a high opinion of one's self, modesty indicates that one has a small opinion of one's own capacities and abilities. We must, however, distinguish between conceit and pride. It is a common notion that while a conceited man is proud, the modest man is devoid of all pride. This latter may not be true at all. Of course the conceited man is proud, proud of his appearance, or ability, or attainments, or acquisitions, but while it may take another form many a modest man is proud as well. Does this seem contradictory? Let me explain. I began by saying that modesty is characterized by one's having a small opinion of one's self. That is correct. Is that why it is so difficult to get a modest man to do anything? Is it because he feels himself wholly incapable? In some cases, surely, in other cases not at all. Often the situation is this: he is proud, he will do nothing unless he can do it with credit

to himself, which latter he fears he cannot and hence he declines. The modest man is never conceited, that would be a contradiction in terms, but proud he may be. He is never an egotist, he may be an egoist.

The truly humble man is neither. Indeed, humility is something far rarer than modesty just because it is something very much finer. It may be found not only in the man who has a small opinion of himself, but also in the man who fully realizes that he possesses wholly unusual talents and powers. He may be a preacher, a Savonarola, a Whitefield, a Beecher, a Spurgeon. He knows it, not merely because vast throngs follow him, neither merely because he is told so to his face, no, he knows it because he has taken his own measure and found the popular judgment correct. He may be a great teacher, a Socrates, a Melanchthon, a Thomas Arnold, a William James. He knows it. Not only do his pupils worship him but his own judgment tells him that he is. And yet and still he is absolutely void of all vanity or conceit. That is not modesty. That is humility. That is why it would be improper to speak of Jesus, who was deeply humble, as being modest. Jesus was not modest. Jesus had anything but a small opinion of himself. Far from it. Never did other sane man ever make such stupendous claims for himself, but being truly humble he who claimed that he was nothing less than the Son of the Living

God says meekly: "Not my will but thine be done."¹⁾

Humility, then, is not necessarily characterized by having a small opinion of one's self, which may be only modesty, no, rather it is characterized by forgetfulness of self, by the crucifixion of self if need be, by consenting to do what we are called upon to do be our talents great or small. Humility, not modesty, leads us to say: "Here I am Lord, Thou knowest my talents great or small, such as they are they are Thine. Use me as Thou wilt." That, my friends, is true humility.

Does this complete self-surrender mean that you must undertake everything to which people may call you? By no manner of means. It means that you must begin with a study of self, the objective — in so far as humanly possible — study of self, in order to ascertain what gifts and abilities you may or may not have. It means persistent self-study till you come to that rare thing — self-knowledge, of which Thomas a Kempis well said, "the highest and most profitable [study], is the true knowledge and consideration of ourselves."²⁾ Having attained to self-knowledge we know what we can and cannot do, know when we must consent and when we may decline to do what is asked of us.

¹⁾ This interpretation of the terms modesty and humility is radically different from that advanced by John Erskine in the *Century Magazine* for November, 1927. With all respect for the brilliancy of this writer I believe that he is on the wrong track.

²⁾ *Imitation of Christ*, 2, IV.

There are, of course, other factors that may and often do enter in. Physical limitations, for example, may excuse us. If we have a proper sense of duty, if there is consecration, and if we have attained to a considerable knowledge of ourselves we cannot go far wrong. Never permit others to decide for you as they so often are eager to do. Others may think that you should do this or that. They may be mistaken. Whether they are or are not since the responsibility is yours the final decision must be yours.

And so, my friends, so far from believing my counsel to you of this evening inappropriate I despair of finding in the whole treasure-house of Scripture anything else quite so fitting. Therefore, that which I urge upon you I urge upon all present here, not forgetting myself, be clothed not merely with modesty, which may only cloak a sense of inferiority and at best is merely human, but, "be clothed with humility."

XVI

OUR COUNTRY — ITS DISTINGUISHING
CHARACTERISTIC

It is a good land which the Lord
our God doth give us.—Deut. 1:25.

There are two kinds of people I do not like. They are, first, the alien whose favorite theme is the real or supposed superiority of the fatherland or mother country, who tells me and everybody else within reach of his voice that in the old country everything is better — the potatoes, the meat (which he probably seldom tasted), the butter, the cheese, the children, the ministers, *ad infinitum*. I wish we could send him and all of his breed back tomorrow. Why stay here if everything is better back yonder? If he really is too poor to pay his passage probably we can raise a purse for him. Anything to get rid of him.

I wish to be correctly understood. I believe that some current notions of Americanization are all wrong. Many seem to expect of the alien who comes to our shores that he shall promptly forget the old country and love only the new, which not only is next to impossible, but, if possible, wholly undesirable. Listen. Suppose one of you young men asks some young woman to marry you. Suppose, further, she says, "Surely, John, I will marry you, but on one condition, namely, the moment you

marry me you must forget, completely forget, once for all forget, your mother." What are you going to say? If you are not wholly blinded, deafened, dumbled, anaesthetized by your infatuation you will say, "never, goodbye." The man who the moment he marries can cease loving mother is a man whose love is not worth having, and the woman who can make such a demand is a jealous body who would make even St. Francis unhappy.

So he is not a desirable immigrant who on reaching this country promptly forgets the land of his birth. No, we realize it is only natural that he should continue to love it, and only expect of him that gradually he will come to love America first; but then he must not be forever comparing to its disadvantage the new with the old, any more than the husband should be continually harping on the superiority of mother's cooking.

Just so little as I like the hypercritical alien just so little do I like a certain species of one-hundred-percenter who is forever shouting, "my country, right or wrong," who, the moment we go to war with some foreign power, let us say England, wants me to agree that all Englishmen are devils anyhow, and who, should I refuse, promptly denounces me as pro-English. Underneath the cloak of one-hundred-percentism blatant schemers only too often are merely seeking to feather their own nests, witness the mayor of a neighboring city. There was in the old English *Book of Common Prayer* a pathetic petition that

read, "from the fury of the Northmen . . . good Lord, deliver us." It would not be irreverent to substitute for it today the petition, "from the shouting of the jingoes, good Lord, deliver us." It is they who by rattling their sabers, or by strutting about with chips on their shoulders, help to precipitate so many a war.

Tomorrow is Washington's birthday. Since it is for us a holiday I want to say something appropriate today. Instead of speaking of Washington I shall speak of something more precious to him, namely, our country, the land where most of us were born and which I trust all of us love. I want to consider for just a few moments what makes America America, what distinguishes our country from others.

It is not our mountains — there are those that are higher and others that are more beautiful; it is not our rivers — there are rivers that carry even more water to the sea than our Father of Waters; it is not Niagara Falls — there are falls grander than our own; it is not even our skyscrapers so characteristically American, and for which we need offer no apologies, for the best of them, the Tribune Tower and the Woolworth Building, for example, are in their own way as truly things of beauty as are the cathedrals of St. Patrick and St. John the Divine.

It would, however, be folly to look for the distinctive features of a country in such things. Not that they are matters of indifference. I shall not

soon forget the thrill my first view of the Mississippi gave me. What Swiss does not love his Alps? What Hollander does not love his dunes and dikes, and beautiful meadows? How my soul was stirred within me when on returning from Europe one bright late-summer morning I first saw again the jagged skyline of New York. Yet, after all, these things are not the essentially distinguishing characteristics of a country.

What makes America America? I am going to let an illiterate foreigner tell you, a Greek who as a young man came to our shores, and who, being diligent and thrifty, prospered to such an extent that soon he had a "shoe-shine parlor" of his own. One day he discovered that a young lady who frequented his place was a teacher in the city schools. At once he was all enthusiasm and started to tell her about his Tony who attended the public schools. "Tony," said he, his face aglow with pride, "my boy Tony, he reada da papers," with an inimitable gesture, "just like that." Then, escorting the teacher to the entrance as if she were the queen of the Greeks, "Madam School-teacher, dis is da land of da oportun'."

There you have it. This ignorant Greek, better than many a hundred-per-center, realized what makes America America. It is the land of opportunity in the sense that no other country is. That is precisely why we are here within these college

walls. Had our parents or grandparents before us not come to these hospitable shores do you know where nine out of ten of us would be this very minute? I will tell you. We would be in Europe bound to the soil with a peasant's outlook and a peasant's future. Is it possible that in the face of this some few among us are lukewarm in our attachment to a land that has made everything possible for us? There is nothing you cannot aspire to. I do not say you will get it, but under God it will depend not on the social or financial status of your parents — it will depend wholly and solely upon yourself. "It is a good land which the Lord our God doth give us," like every other far from perfect, yet more than deserving of our love and affection. Give it unstintedly. If we must criticise, and I think we often should, let us criticise not as if we were outsiders but as children might criticise father or mother, and let us not only criticise but let us do something to remedy what we find amiss. If we can do no more we can at least go to the polls and attempt to vote right. Above all do not be fools. Our parents, yours and mine, came here not because of religious persecution, no, they came because like our Greek they saw no future in the fatherland for us their children. They broke the strongest of bonds to come to this new land that we might have opportunities they never enjoyed. And what are some of our young people now do-

ing? Neglecting to make the most of these opportunities. What fools. I wish I could shake some sense into them. Wake up if you are one of them. God gives you your opportunity. One day you shall have to give an account of what you did with it.

XVII

WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?

What is philosophy?

In my reading I have stumbled upon some amusing replies to this question. William James says the philosopher has been likened to “‘a blind man in a dark room looking for a black hat that is not there’.”¹⁾ Again, on the same page, James quotes a writer who declares the occupation of the philosopher has been, the “‘systematic abuse of a terminology invented for just this purpose’.”²⁾

Madame Rousseau, the foster-mother of the great French mathematician d'Alembert said, a philosopher is “‘a fool who torments himself during his life that people may talk of him when he is dead’.”³⁾

A character in a delicious dialogue to be found in Scheffel's great historical romance, *Ekkehard*, says:

“When one does not know just why he exists and stands on his head in order to learn, that is

1) *Some Problems of Philosophy*, N. Y., 1916, p. 9.

2) Systematische Missbrauch einer eben zu diesem Zwecke erfundenen Terminologie.

3) Tallentyre, S. G., *Friends of Voltaire*, N. Y., 1907, p. 5.

approximately what they of the land of the evening sun call philosophy."⁴)

Again, there is the definition of Dickens' Sam Weller. Speaking of his father — who has married a Xantippe — the immortal Sam says:

" 'If my mother blows him up, he whistles. If she flies in a passion, and breaks his pipe, he steps out and gets another. Then she screams very loud and falls into 'sterics; and he smokes wery comfortably till she comes to again. That's philosophy, sir, ain't it?' " ⁵)

Lastly, a Scot has given us this definition of metaphysics, a term commonly used interchangeably with philosophy: " 'When the perty that listens doesna ken what the perty that's speakin' means, and when the perty that's speakin' doesna ken himsel' what he means, that is metaphysics.' " ⁶)

All jesting aside now, it would be difficult to find a word of equal prominence that has undergone so many changes of meaning. Turn to the word "Philosophie" in Eisler's *Wörterbuch der philosophischen Begriffe*,⁷) and you will find thirteen pages of definitions beginning with Herodotus and extending till the present time. Hence

⁴) Wenn einer nicht weiss warum er auf der Welt ist, und sich auf den Kopf stellt ums zu erfahren, das ist ungefähr was die im Abendland Philosophie heissen. (Chap. 13).

⁵) *Pickwick Papers*, chap. 16.

⁶) Quoted by George A. Gordon, in his *My Education and Religion*, Boston, 1925, p. 66.

⁷) Berlin, third ed., 1910.

it is inordinately difficult to define the term and to then use it consistently, which, of course, makes it most puzzling for the historian of philosophy to determine what he shall record and what omit, for what a given person or age calls philosophy another person or age may reject.

We shall probably do best if we begin with the etymology of the word. While this cannot, of course, determine the meaning of the word to-day, since in the course of time the original meaning of a word may even be completely reversed, it may, none the less, shed some light. The etymology should at least give us a notion of the historical origin of the term.

Herodotus in all probability was the first to employ the verb *philosopheon*, to philosophize. He represents Croesus telling Solon of his having heard that "from desire of knowledge Solon has traversed many lands, *philosopheon*." The verb means striving after knowledge. Pythagoras is sometimes given credit for being the first to insist on being called not a *sophos* — a wise man — but a *philosophos* — a seeker after wisdom. Most scholars, however, attribute this remark to Socrates with whose whole personality it agrees as it does not with that of Pythagoras, who was only too willing to pass for a sage.

God, said this early philosopher, be he Socrates or Pythagoras, God alone is wise, man can only be a friend of wisdom.

Originally then philosophy indicated a certain attitude toward wisdom and the striving to which it led, but soon it was used also to indicate the product of this striving. For Plato the philosopher is one who sees the true essence of things, the ideas. Philosophy, for Plato, is the study, the love of that which is, in distinction from that which seems to be. In his *Republic* Plato defines the philosopher as one who is a lover "of the vision of truth." ⁸⁾

Aristotle defines philosophy as the science of truth. He identifies philosophy with science in general, but he also recognizes a *First Philosophy*, a pre-eminently philosophical discipline, which comprises the systematic and critical knowledge of the most general and fundamental principles of being. Today we would call this metaphysics, or still more narrowly, ontology.

If we thoughtfully sift the meaning of the word philosophy as used by the ancients we shall find that it is pretty well equivalent to our term "pure science." Science and philosophy spring from a common root. When we speak today of pure mathematics or pure astronomy we mean the study of these sciences for no other purpose than to add to our knowledge. What is this but the philosophy of the ancients — a wholly disinterested search after truth?

With the rise of Christianity the term philosophy acquires a new coloring. Distinction is

⁸⁾ Book V.

made between what we know through divine revelation and the knowledge we obtain by our reason. Philosophy came to mean the knowledge attained by the natural light of reason as distinguished from that secured only by revelation. The distinction appears in the definition of philosophy as *scientia saecularis*, worldly wisdom, temporal science.

Descartes uses the word once more with the meaning given to it by the Greeks, namely, as equivalent to science.

In England since time immemorial the terms philosophy and science have been used interchangeably. Newton called his great work *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*. Locke uses philosophy and science as synonymous terms. It may be interesting to note that the philosophical societies of England are chiefly devoted to investigations in natural science.

In Germany Kant was careful to distinguish between science and philosophy. Philosophy, says Kant, begins with reason; science starts from experience. Since Kant the German tendency is to distinguish sharply between the rational and the empirical. In one sphere the old meaning of philosophy still obtains in Germany; the "faculty of philosophy" in a German university includes all learned branches outside of theology, law, and medicine.

For Fichte philosophy is *Wissenschaftslehre*, that is, science of knowledge, while for Hegel philosophy is the science of the Absolute.

Coming to our own day we find that Wundt declares the function of philosophy to be the unification of all knowledge obtained by the special sciences. For Paulsen philosophy is the sum-total of all scientific knowledge, which makes the sciences pretty much independent of philosophy but philosophy dependent upon the separate sciences, a view that has become rather prevalent.

Very well, you say, but now please tell us what philosophy really is, for all you have done thus far is to increase our confusion. A fair request but much easier made than granted. If the term has meant so many things to so many people ever since the Greeks how can you expect anybody to-day to provide a definition that will win universal approbation? It cannot be done. All I can do is tell you what the term has come to mean for me. Originality I claim not a particle. What I am going to say you can find with variations in the writings of Friedrich Paulsen, Wilhelm Wundt, and Abraham Kuyper.

What then is philosophy? It is what the Germans call, "*die Wissenschaft der Grundbegriffe*," that is, it investigates the basal concepts that underlie all the special sciences, and furthermore, seeks to unify these sciences.

By the last clause I mean this: there are many sciences. The relation between some is evident, for example, between botany and zoology, between anatomy and physiology; between others it is not evident, as, for example, between psychology and

geology. Nevertheless, the whole body of sciences, however they may differ among themselves, is interrelated, constitutes a single whole. To find this unity which binds all the sciences together, just that, it seems to me, is the task of philosophy. Each science enriches the world with certain results and it is these that the philosopher seizes upon in order that out of the results obtained from the most various fields he may construct a harmonious whole. As Kuyper expresses it beautifully in his *Encyclopaedie*:

“De filosofie is geroepen om de mensche-lijke kennis, die door alle overige wetenschappen aan het licht is gebracht, tot een architektonisch geheel in elkander te zetten en aan te toonen hoe dit gebouw uit één basis opstijgt.”⁹⁾

When I say that it is the function of philosophy to investigate the basal concepts that underlie the special sciences I mean this: The various special sciences all begin with certain assumptions; the physicist and chemist with the assumption that matter has objective existence, can be seen, weighed, measured; the biologist with the assumption that plants and animals have objective material existence, as living organisms, and so on. But these assumptions are open to question, have been questioned. Now it is just these assumptions with which the special sciences must needs begin that philosophy should study.

I have said that it is the task of philosophy to

⁹⁾ Amsterdam, 1897, vol. II, p. 562.

unify the sciences. There never has been a time when there was greater need of just that than today, the day of microscopic specialization. I have known eminent scholars who had specialized so long and so narrowly that they could not see the forest because of a single tree. I once knew a mathematician who thought condescendingly of every other discipline, a physicist who, beyond mathematics and another science or two, had a small opinion of everything else. Such men have lost perspective. But the philosopher stands back until he sees all the sciences fall into their proper places, until he sees them as one architectonic whole. It is possible, is it not, to stand so close to a hill that you cannot see the mountains that overtop it, to stand so close to a door that you cannot see the house. The philosopher realizes this and stands back till he sees the glorious snow-capped range that dwarfs the little hill in the foreground, stands back till he sees that after all the door is but one, and that only a minor feature, of what proves to be a magnificent palace.

I realize that superficial minds will quickly enough seize upon such a notion of philosophy in order to ridicule it. Who in these days of specialization when a chemist can be a chemist only and hardly that but must limit himself to say the carbon compounds and finds that field too vast by far; when a biologist can be a biologist only and hardly that but must limit himself to botany or zoology and finds either of these fields too large for mastery; I say, who, in these latter days, dare

undertake to study philosophy if the term has the meaning I am trying to give it? And if some heroic, possibly we should say foolish soul, did venture, should we not apply to him the old German lines:

“Viele Dinge wusst’ er freilich,
Aber alle wusst’ er schlecht.”

Who, who would not expose himself to the laughter of the scientific world, would today dare to profess to be a philosopher? Well, all that has been said in no wise destroys the validity of our definition of philosophy. Remember that the “definitions of sciences are definitions not of empirically given objects but *definitions of problems*, and the validity of these definitions depends upon the proper characterization of the problem, no matter what progress the solution may have made. Indeed, even though the solution had not yet begun the definition would retain its validity. ‘It is,’ one might say, adopting Kant’s language, ‘an idea, that is, a concept for which there is no corresponding object in empirical reality.’¹⁰) Chemistry is the science of chemical changes. That would be true though no human being had ever yet observed so much as one chemical change, and though the field is now so rapidly expanding that not even Lavoisier himself could keep up with the march of progress, a chemist remains one who studies chemical changes. We call a man a chem-

¹⁰) Paulsen, Friedrich, *Introduction to Philosophy*, N. Y., 1907, p. 35.

ist not because he knows every chemical change but because he gives his life to the study of these changes.

The fact that nobody can possess all knowledge need not at all disturb us. When we say that So-and-So is a historian do we mean that he knows all history? I trow not. All that we mean is that he is a student of history, makes it his special task to investigate history. A historian is not a man who knows all history, but one who strives after a comprehensive knowledge of history. So a philosopher is one who *strives*, yes, after a universal knowledge of things. You must never forget that the old Greek word for philosophy means not a possessor but a lover of knowledge. Paulsen most aptly characterizes the philosopher by quoting these lines from Goethe's *Tasso*:

“ ‘Sein Ohr vernimmt den Einklang der Natur,
Was die Geschichte reicht, das Leben giebt,
Sein Busen nimmt es gleich und willig auf,
Das weit Zerstreute sammelt sein Gemüth,
Und sein Gefühl belebt das Unbelebte.’ ” ¹¹⁾

In conclusion, if what I have said is true then who cares to be a philosopher? Is that your way of expressing it? I would rather say, who would not care to be a philosopher? Could anything be more interesting? Could much be more worth while?

¹¹⁾ *Idem*, p. 44.

Could much be more worth while? Assuredly, I hear somebody answering, almost anything is. As a matter of fact, does philosophy bring us anywhere? Is she not endlessly threshing the very same old straw, endlessly raising the same old questions already discussed by the ancients? "O schöne Sphinx!" says Heine in his *Buch der Lieder*,

"O schöne Sphinx! O löse mir,
Das Rätsel, das Wunderbare!
Ich hab darüber nachgedacht
Schon manche tausand Jahre."

As Bomhard in his *Lebensfragen* expresses it: "The riddles of existence are as little solved today as in the days of Thales and Pythagoras All efforts at solution have proved vain and the toil is that of Sisyphus."¹²⁾

What shall we answer? This, says Bomhard in substance. Merely to state the riddles is worth while. The man in the street does not even realize their existence. To become conscious of them, to have been led to the brink of unfathomable prob-

¹²⁾ Sperl, August, editor, Munich, 1909, p. 57. The original reads as follows:

"Ja, aber die Rätsel des Daseins sind ja heute noch so wenig gelöst wie zu den Zeiten des Thales und Pythagoras. Die Schlüssel, von Zeit zu Zeit mit grosser Prahlerei ausgeboten, sind immer wieder von den Nächstfolgenden als unbrauchbar verworfen worden, und die Türe bleibt verschlossen. Also war ja alles Bemühen vergeblich, und die Arbeit ist die des Sisyphus. Lasst sie also liegen und versucht nicht Unmögliches."

lems, to have gained some conception of their magnitude breeds reverence.¹³⁾

Bomhard has a point here but he does not go far enough. Philosophy does more than this. It does lead somewhere. As I have already shown for the Greeks philosophy and science were identical. The various sciences were part of the one grand discipline philosophy. Gradually as knowledge in particular divisions and subdivisions of philosophy grew some of them broke away and set up shop for themselves. Mathematics and astronomy, once constituent parts of philosophy, became independent sciences. Physics as "natural philosophy" until quite lately was part of philosophy. Right now psychology is breaking away from the leading strings of philosophy to start housekeeping for herself. Is it fair then to say that philosophy has led nowhere?

But can I deny that she is still seeking answers to problems already raised by the Greeks? Of course not, but of this she need not be ashamed.

13) "Darauf dieses: Schon das Auffinden und Darlegen dieser Rätsel ist eine höchst verdienstliche Arbeit. Denn der gemeine Verstand ahnet sie gar nicht, oder wo er sie zu berühren genötigt ist, fertigt er das Problem mit Worten ab, unter denen er sich nichts denkt. Aber die Philosophen sagen den Gedankenlosen: siehe, dein Dasein ruht auf unergründlichen Tiefen, in die dein Auge nie hinabgeblickt hat. Ich will dich an den Rand hinführen, blicke hinab, lerne die Wunder deiner eigenen Natur kennen und die der Welt. Wenn du sie auch nicht begreifst, so bekommst du doch von dir und den Dingen eine höhere Ansicht und tiefere Achtung davor. Und damit ist schon viel gewonnen." *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

It is precisely because philosophy deals so largely with ultimate problems, some of which even transcend human reason, that we have no answer to all of them.

But, it is objected, is not the study of philosophy dangerous? I ask, what do you mean by dangerous? Well, is there not the danger for a Christian young man that in studying these fundamental problems he may lose his faith? Is not even the study of the history of philosophy with its record of the rise and fall of first one and then another system of thought dangerous? Is there not the danger that after seeing first one system crumble and fall, then another rise only to fall in turn, seeing that no two harmonize, that nothing seems certain, I say, is there not the danger that in the end only too often our student loses the most cherished convictions, and has for his pains only a head full of doubt? May he not doubt the very existence of a personal God after hearing so much about His immanence? Has not personal immortality become for him an infantile conception, for has he not been taught that there is no more a personal soul than there is a personal God? Has not sin become for him a mere notion that arose in the course of evolution, society having stigmatized as sinful certain actions which it found to be inimical to the progress of the race? Such a young man's state of mind is admirably expressed by the German who said: "Ich lebe, ich weiss nicht wie lang, ich sterbe, ich weiss nicht wann, ich gehe, ich weiss nicht wohin, wie ist es

möglich," yes, "wie ist es möglich, dass ich noch so fröhlich bin!" "Möglich," possibly because he comes to the conclusion: Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.

There is no denying the fact that the Christian young man who in the most impressionable years of his life enters upon the study of philosophy in any of many of our present day colleges and universities is exposed to the greatest danger of losing his faith. However, from this it does not follow that one should not study philosophy. It simply emphasizes the fact that it makes a tremendous difference where and under whom one is taught the subject. It is not at all an argument against the study of philosophy as such, for it is by no means in that subject alone that our young people come face to face with modernistic teaching. They will run into it in psychology, in biology, and in many other fields. Indeed, these teachings have been popularized and have filtered into our magazines and even into the daily papers. Not only that, but at least those of our young people who are to become leaders must be confronted with all these doctrines, only it makes a world of difference how and by whom this office is performed. Moreover, in the very danger there is an element of value. When we are young we are in great danger of overestimating the power of man's unaided reason. We dislike to take things on faith. Philosophy demonstrates we must. It is as Bomhard says, "the end of all philosophy is to know that we must believe," or as President Patton

expressed it in a sermon of more than a quarter century ago, "philosophy should make us more believing."¹⁴⁾

And so I want to end with the apparently paradoxical assertion that so far from not being permitted to study philosophy it is only the believing, but then truly believing young man, who may safely embark upon the study of philosophy.¹⁵⁾

¹⁴⁾ *Princeton Sermons*, N. Y., 1893, p. 151.

¹⁵⁾ "Aber," says Bomhard, *Op. cit.*, p. 61, "Ohne Mathematik im Kopfe und ohne Religion im Herzen soll mir keiner an die Philosophie gehen, er wird wie die Fliege an der Lampe ins Feuer stürzen."

XVIII

WHAT IS A PROFESSION

The Lord sparing me I purpose to speak from time to time on some of the so-called learned professions. However, before discussing the various professions in the concrete, I think it will be worth our while to consider the idea profession in the abstract. I hear people speak today of the profession of nursing. Is it a profession? Is business? Is salesmanship? Is the realtor, as the real estate broker is beginning to call himself, a professional man? Is the man who makes his living by going up in balloons practicing a profession? Is teaching a profession? Who knows? Who shall say? Well, I am going to give you the criteria which I myself apply. I dare not say that in the absence of any one of these characteristics a given kind of work cannot possibly be a profession, but I venture to say that in the case of such absence an occupation falls short of the ideal of a profession.

What, then, makes a profession a profession? What distinguishes the professional man from the artisan? Is it a white collar? Is it a bigger income? No. Even if these differences should obtain they would be purely adventitious, mere "accidents." As I see it every true profession is characterized by four earmarks of which the first is

a presupposed liberal education. What, you ask, do you mean by that? I will tell you. I might begin by saying that a liberal education is such an one as one can get at our better American colleges. You notice this is rather carefully expressed. I do not say, can only get at our better American colleges. That would be false. A liberal education is possible without attendance upon college, just as it is possible to pass through college without acquiring even the semblance of such an education. The truth of this does not alter the fact that a liberal education is best and most easily obtained at college. But then, our colleges being what they are today, you shall have to chose your studies with discretion. The man who goes through college and studies little but agriculture so-called, or forestry, or accounting, has not had a liberal education at all. It is precisely characteristic of a liberal education that it is non-utilitarian, prepares you for no trade, or craft, or profession, but prepares you for life, prepares you, as Woodrow Wilson puts it in his beautiful essay on *The Spirit of Learning*, "for the whole of life rather than some particular part of it."¹)

While, then, a liberal education implies the study of subjects ordinarily not considered practical, for example, the classics, history, philosophy, literature, and the like, the study of these branches of learning is none the less highly useful.

¹) Reprinted in *Essays for College Men*, N. Y., 1913, p. 4.

Probably the best evidence for this is the fact that our best professional schools either demand or at least urge a college education as a condition for entrance upon their courses. There are a number of reasons why this should be so. Although I cannot begin to enlarge upon them at this time I wish to dwell briefly upon the one which I consider fundamental; namely this: all professional training and practice from its very nature is narrowing, inevitably so, however regrettable the fact. "It is notorious," says Woodrow Wilson on the same page of the essay from which I have already quoted, "how deep and how narrow the absorptions of the professional school are and how they are necessarily concentrated upon the methods and interests of a particular occupation. . . . This is to say nothing to its discredit. Its nature and objects are different from those of the college—as legitimate, as useful, as necessary; but different. The college is the place of orientation; the professional school is the place of concentration. The object of the college is to liberalize and moralize; the object of the professional school is to train the powers to a special task. And this is true of all vocational study."

All this is profoundly true. Enter, let us say, a medical school and you will at once discover that a course of study has been mapped out for you that leaves time for little else. Then when you get into actual practice you find the field so immense that you wish you could—as, indeed, more and more do—limit yourself to the treatment of

some one particular disease or group of diseases. So it is with every profession—there is so much to do that there are not hours enough in the day to accomplish one's task. In the good old days a man could master all of the arts. Some of you know the opening lines of Goethe's *Faust*:

Habe nun, ach! Philosophie,
Juristerei und Medizin,
Und leider auch Theologie
Durchaus studiert.

Such a thing, indeed, was by no means unheard of. Take, for example, a man like Melancthon, one of the very greatest Greek scholars of his day, indeed, second only to Erasmus, a leading theologian writing the first Protestant handbook on systematic theology, and also, though this is less generally known, a competent physician. Neither is there anything so very remarkable about this considering that in so far as medicine was not the crudest empiricism the whole of the science was contained in the Greek sources which Melancthon, of course, read with ease. "In those happy days," says Sir William Osler in his Oxford address of 1919, delivered before the British Classical Association, "to know Hippocrates and Galen was to know disease and to be qualified to practice." ²⁾ .

John Caird in his Glasgow address of 1897 on

²⁾ *The Old Humanities and the New Science*, N. Y. 1920, p. 5.

General and Professional Education has well said:

“The time has been when the notion of universal knowledge, the attempt to gain something more than a superficial acquaintance with all the various departments of human thought, was not so absurd as it now seems to be. When books were few and life more leisurely, when the vast domain of physical science had scarcely begun to be explored, and even its principles and methods were not understood; when the sciences of philology and historical criticism were yet in their infancy; when political economy, sociology, and kindred sciences had not yet begun to be, it was possible, at least for some minds, to grapple not unsuccessfully with almost all the main subjects of human thought, and to become conversant with every important work in the whole range of literature. But we have fallen on other and different times. In our day it is impossible, not merely for the average student, but for even those of the greatest ability and application, to advance far in the work of acquiring knowledge without discovering that limitation and condensation are the conditions of success. Encyclopedic knowledge can now be only another name for shallowness and superficiality. To attain the highest proficiency in any one branch of literature or science—or a fairly accurate acquaintance with two or three—the most ambitious student must be content to be comparatively ignorant of everything else, and to look on whole departments of thought

and research as for him practically proscribed. To a certain extent we must all be either specialists or amateurs; we must make our choice between real and accurate, but limited, knowledge and mere dilettantism."

All this is indubitably true but also brings its own particular danger. Nobody could point this out more cogently than does Osler in the address from which I have just quoted. "The extraordinary development of science," says he, "may be her undoing. Specialism, now a necessity, has fragmented the specialties themselves in a way that makes the outlook hazardous. The workers lose all sense of proportion in a maze of minutiae. Everywhere men are in small coteries intensely absorbed in subjects of deep interest, but of very limited scope. Chemistry, a century ago an appanage of the Chair of Medicine or even of Divinity, has now a dozen departments, each with its laboratory and literature, sometimes its own society. Applying themselves early to research, young men get into backwaters far from the main stream. They quickly lose the sense of proportion, become hypercritical, and the smaller the field, the greater the tendency to megaloccephaly. The study for fourteen years of the variations in the colour scheme of the thirteen hundred species of tiger-beetles scattered over the earth may sterilize a man into a sticker of pins and a paster of labels."³⁾

³⁾ *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

"The modern world," says Professor Brownell of Northwestern, "moves toward monasticism. Each in his own cell, the specialists are building worlds, and their prayers and aspirations float out like pink and blue balloons that have no other contact with each other than the touch and jostle of hurrying toward the sky. Each in his own cell, called a specialized department, the experts are telling their beads, manipulating their sacred formulas, sinking their souls in the ritual of their special job, and praying God to keep their eyes from wandering to the green breadth of the meadows and other casual wonders of the world." ⁴⁾

The danger is sufficiently evident. Even after a liberal education the peril of becoming narrow, circumscribed in one's vision, intolerant of others is very great. What then must become of the man who never had that broad outlook which a truly liberal education tends to give? Who has not seen the narrow intolerance of men of excellent abilities who had missed the liberalizing influence of a non-professional training. Do not take a short cut into some profession. Remember that Browning spoke truth when he said, in his *Grammarians' Funeral*,

"Oh, if we draw a circle premature
Heedless of far gain,
Greedy for quick return of profit, sure
Bad is our bargain."

⁴⁾ Brownell, Baker, *The New Universe*, N. Y., 1927.

The second characteristic of a profession is that it pre-supposes professional training. Since the very earliest times this has been insisted upon in one form or other even in the complete absence of a preliminary general training. When, for example, in our own School, a good many years ago now, we had what was known as a "literary course" of only four years, we had as many years of theological training as we have today, although the time given to literary studies has since been doubled. A century and more ago young men without any preliminary education beyond the barest rudiments entered the offices of practicing lawyers and physicians for their professional training. Even in the most ancient times one was not ordinarily expected to practice a profession without some specific training. The Israelites, you will remember, had their schools of the prophets.

The third characteristic of a profession is that those who enter upon a given profession do so with the expectation of devoting their lives to it. I do not say they never drop out, but they begin with the intention of making the profession which they have chosen their life work. Nobody goes through a medical or theological school with the notion of remaining in either of the professions for which these schools prepare a few years in order then to turn to something else. As a matter of fact neither medical science nor any other science would ever get anywhere if its practitioners had a professional life of but a few years.

Indeed, except it be in an emergency, most of us are slow in consulting physicians who have not had at least a few years of practice. Right here we have, I regret to say, the gravest obstacle for the making of elementary school teaching in our United States a genuine profession. Our teachers are almost exclusively women of whom few if any begin with the intention of making teaching their life work. I just stated an elementary truth when I said that nobody goes through medical or theological school with the notion of remaining in either of the professions for which they prepare only a few years and then turn to another calling; but thousands upon thousands of young women pass through our normal schools with exactly the intention, or shall I say hope, of teaching a few years and then becoming wives and mothers. Now that is fatal to a true professional spirit, which, indeed, is too largely lacking in our elementary schools. It is just because in Germany and the Netherlands so many do enter upon teaching as a life task that one finds himself there in a so much more professional atmosphere. Do not misunderstand me. I am not trying to insinuate that women are inferior to men as teachers; all I am trying to say is that you cannot get a true profession of any kind so long as its practitioners, male or female, do not at least enter upon the work with the expectation of giving their lives to it.

Lastly, it seems to me, there should be a fourth characteristic, namely, the professional man

should not work for gain. The artisan, the business man frankly does. It is, of course, entirely possible and not unusual that they do not care for money as such, spend it freely for all manner of causes, but, nevertheless, they work at their trade or pursue their business for the money there is in it. This should never be true of the professions. There is a good reason for this, namely, it is a complete impossibility to evaluate the work of a professional man in terms of money. How much in hard cash is it worth to have a minister instrumental in leading a sinner to Christ? Does not the Bible itself teach us that a single soul is worth more than a whole world of material things? When your physician is the means of saving the life of your child you can pay his bill, but you yourself feel you cannot adequately pay him with money for his service. You can pay the teacher a niggardly or a generous wage, but you cannot pay him in terms of money for having instilled into your son or daughter right habits and right ideals of living. Not only, therefore, should not a minister work for gain, but no more should a teacher, or lawyer, or physician. The professional man is or should be interested first and foremost not in his salary or fee, but in his flock, his pupils, his clients, his patients, his science or art. He is not indifferent to money, he needs it and in order to live well needs more than he often gets, but money is and remains secondary in his interests. I grieve to say that it seems to me that in this respect there is if anything a decline in some

professions. There is a wide spread suspicion that often a minister's acceptance or declination of a call is influenced too much by the salary that goes with it. For enough money it would seem there is no legal job so crooked or so dirty but that only too many lawyers can be found eager to undertake it. The public believes that if a person accused of some heinous crime cares to plead insanity he can, provided he is wealthy, get plenty of medical experts to testify for him; the public also believes that the State, if willing to go to the expense, can get an equal number of equally distinguished experts to testify to the man's sanity.

The high fees that are being charged by medical men today as contrasted with only a decade or two ago is tempting men into the profession of whom I fear that their motive is far too mercenary. Osler calls them, "Gehazis who serve for shekels, whose ears hear only the lowing of the oxen and the jingling of the guineas."⁵⁾ Mercenary motives in the medical and other professions are bound to avenge themselves. The science whose practitioners are working largely for gain is doomed. Medical science is what it is today because men like Pasteur and Koch were wholly indifferent to wealth and interested solely in their science. If I may mention Osler just once more I wish to quote the following passage from Cush-

⁵⁾ Cushing, Harvey, *Life of Sir William Osler*, N. Y., 1925, vol. I, p. 408.

ing's admirable biography of the man. "He had," says Cushing, "the greatest contempt for the doctor who made financial gain the first object of his work." ⁶⁾

Later on I hope to speak of some of the various professions. I feel, however, that it was wise to make this preliminary survey. I suspect that some of you now realize already that a profession is not for you. That is something gained. Some of you should go into business, some into other occupations. We cannot and should not all be professional men. Some of us have talents of a different order. I know a group of brothers who are exceedingly prosperous in their business, who do not hoard their gain but as they prosper give most generously to every good cause. Most beautiful of all, they not only give of their wealth they give themselves; they not only spend but are willing to be spent. Why, if you have gifts to serve in some such way even though not on the same scale, why push into some profession probably already overcrowded, as most professions are, and for which you have no special aptitude? But whatever you turn your hand to, do it with all your might, and remember that there is no form of honest toil that we cannot and must not perform to the glory of God and the welfare of our fellowman.

⁶⁾ *Op. cit.*, I, p. 177.

XIX

THE MINISTER

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him that bringeth good
tidings, that publisheth peace; that
bringeth good tidings of good, that
publisheth salvation; that saith unto
Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Isaiah 52:7.

The Bureau of Education in Washington has collected some interesting statistics, beginning about 1645, on the distribution of college graduates in the United States among various occupations. What especially attracted my attention is the steady decline in the percentage of college graduates who enter upon the gospel ministry. Permit me to quote the figures:

At about 1645 seventy per cent of all college graduates went into the ministry. After that the figures are as follows:¹⁾

1700	.	.	.	.	.	.	65.6
1750	.	.	.	.	.	.	37.9
1800	.	.	.	.	.	.	21.4
1850	.	.	.	.	.	.	23.1
1875	.	.	.	.	.	.	16.7
1900	.	.	.	.	.	.	5.9

¹⁾ I have these figures from Inglis, A., *Principles of Secondary Education*, N. Y., 1918, p. 316.

Now just what does this mean? I trust that by this time you have learned enough to be just a little cautious in accepting conclusions drawn from statistics. It is a matter of common knowledge that, often quite innocently, they have frequently been used to prove things that are not so. Thus, for example, in interpreting the figures which I have just read it will not do to take them as they stand as an exact indication of the declining interest in the ministry so far as college students are concerned. One must make allowance for the fact that in the early days, especially in New England, men insisted far more on learned ministers than on learned lawyers or physicians. One became a lawyer by reading Blackstone in some lawyer's office and a physician by apprenticing one's self to some practicing physician, in both cases quite commonly after the most meager general training; but one became a minister through schooling, and the study of theology was supposed to be preceded and generally was preceded by the study of the liberal arts.

However, after making every allowance, I think the statistics do indicate a decidedly declining interest in the gospel ministry as a calling. Why should this be? The answer is not always the same but the fundamental reason undoubtedly is the fact that the ministry has changed in character. Once, again especially in New England, a minister was the leading man in his community, partly because he generally had enjoyed the best education, but primarily because religion was the

chief interest in people's lives. Today interest in vital religion is waning, and the minister quite largely has ceased to speak with any semblance of authority, this last because the Bible itself has ceased to be authoritative for many. Once men generally looked upon the Bible as divinely inspired; today a host in the pulpit as well as in the pew regard it as one book among many. The minister in his own eyes as well as those of his people has ceased to be an ambassador of Jesus Christ and has become a mere social worker, a mere uplifter. This is fatal. Absolutely fatal. I am frank to say that with such a conception of the Bible and such a conception of the minister's task all the king's horses and all the king's men could not pull me into the ministry. The mystery for me is how so many young men can still be found to enter upon the work.

With us, fortunately, conditions have not come to such a pass. With us the ministry is still in honor and the minister still speaks with authority. He should. Not, as I have sometimes heard him, as if the authority resided within himself. Occasionally one comes across ministers, especially young ministers, who seem to think that just because they happen to have studied theology they are entitled to speak authoritatively in general. That is nauseating. They cannot do so even in theology. The theologian like any other man of science, be he biologist, astronomer, physicist, philologist, or be he what he may, speaks with authority only just in so far as he has mastered

his field. Surely, we listen reverently to a Warfield and a Bavinck in matters of theology, not, however, because they are theologians but for the very same reason that we listen reverently to a Mayo in surgery, or an Osler in medicine, or a Peirce in mathematics, or a Wundt in psychology, or a Kelvin in physics, namely, because they have made themselves masters each in his own domain. When Sir Oliver Lodge babbles nonsense in psychology I do not swallow it because physicists listen to him, as they should, with respect when he speaks on matters pertaining to his own field. Surely our ministers should speak with authority but with that of the prophet, with a "thus saith the Lord." When our ambassador at the court of Saint James speaks in his own capacity the British minister of foreign affairs will evaluate what he says in terms of his respect for the man's character and judgment, but when our ambassador speaks for the government of the United States the foreign secretary, though he consider him the veriest nincompoop, will heed what he says as coming from one of the world's great powers. The clergyman's authority resides not in himself but in his Sender.

It is a great honor to be an ambassador of the United States, it is a greater honor to be an ambassador of Jesus Christ. Times change. Once, especially in Scotland and the Netherlands, the highest honor that could come to parents was when a son was ordained to the gospel ministry. Was it not Sir Walter Scott who said that in

every Scottish home that had a son who showed promise the parents fondly hoped "that their bairn might wag his pow in a pulpit yet?" Today there are parents who will discourage a boy of parts from wasting himself on a calling that often provides only the barest living. Our fathers had the correct view. No man is too good for the ministry, the only question is whether he is good enough. That is why one should never enter lightly upon so sacred a calling. Men of my father's generation did not. Of late years I fear some of our boys drift into the ministry, a most dangerous thing both for the church and for themselves. I frequently ask students just why they wish to become ministers and I do not always get a satisfactory answer. A number of years ago a student, in reply to my question, told me that he had decided upon the ministry as a career because he possessed a good voice, enjoyed speaking in public, and found study easy. That is all I could get out of him. Now who will deny that these are excellent gifts, but why not become a hawker of patent medicines, or an auctioneer, or a politician? They also need good voices and must enjoy addressing public audiences. I have been told the story of a young man who came to old Dr. William Henry Green of Princeton, saying that he was considering entering the ministry and asked what Dr. Green thought of it. "Don't," said Green, "don't if you can help it. If you can't help it, then go ahead." Surely, there should be something of this divine compulsion.

What are the qualifications for the ministry? A good voice is not essential. Desirable, of course, it is. Would that every minister had the golden voice — I presume he would have preferred me to say silver voice — of the late William Jennings Bryan, but I know a minister who lacks a fine voice and yet is a most popular preacher. Health is more than desirable and every minister should strive to possess it. It makes work easy but essential it is not. Much of the work of the world has been done by frail men. Calvin was. A man with an indomitable will can rise above bodily frailty.

The limitations of time alone forbid my attempting anything like an exhaustive list of qualifications. Some we must take for granted. Surely, it should not be necessary to say that a minister of the gospel should have some experiential knowledge of the Christian religion, should have more than a vague hope that Jesus Christ is his personal Savior, and should have something like a passion for souls. Singling out certain qualifications that it seems to me every minister will find indispensable I shall begin by mentioning first of all courage. Courage a minister must have. Notice my wording. I did not say he must be fearless, as was Luther, who faced without flinching the princes political and ecclesiastical of his day, and as was John Knox before whom even Mary, Queen of Scots, trembled though she feared none other; no, he may be a timid man, but maugre his timidity he must have the courage

to stand for truth and to discipline when discipline is necessary, it matters not whom it hits. In a church that lacks sound mysticism he must dare to be a mystic; in a church that is infected with unhealthy mysticism he must dare to be a rationalist so-called. He must have the courage not only to tell a drunkard that he cannot thus enter the kingdom of heaven, but he must have the courage too to tell an elder or a deacon who is more than stingy that the gates of heaven are closed to misers as well as drunkards. All ministers need not be Luthers or Knoxes but no minister can escape the call to courage, and I pity the man who enters the calling lacking it.

This courage, however, must be united with wisdom. There are men who never accomplish much because they are brave unwisely. Luther, lion though he was, repeatedly failed because of his tactlessness. You may manifest courage by telling a prominent member of the church who esteems himself for being well informed that he is nothing but a common gossip, that most detestable of all gossips a male gossip, only if you are wise you will tell him so at the proper time and in the proper way. Some men, especially young men, are apt to think that because something they advocate is right and good therefore it must be put into effect. Not to do so because it might alienate many of one's people would be cowardice. Well, it may and may not be. That depends. It may be only good sense. Do not forget that once you alienate your people you can get nowhere. It

is something that should never be risked unless a vital principle is at stake. Even then it remains to be seen whether your attempt to put the principle to work should not be preceded by a campaign of education. Zwingli in all his work of reformation in Zürich never made a change until he had carefully prepared the people for it. There are brave, brainy, well-intentioned men who stir up trouble in every church they serve because they are unwise.

A good minister is a student and always remains one. I care not how brilliant he is except he study his vein will work out and he will at best fall short of the greatest usefulness.

He should be a student of human nature, a lover of his kind, especially of the young.

He should be humble. If he finds in himself any vestige of conceit he must remove it even though it require a surgical operation. "A conceited minister is indeed ridiculously funny, but he is more; he is a cruel contrast to the spirit of the Gospel, an afflictive instance of selfishness, a heinous example of littleness in one whose vocation is to measure all men and all things earthly by the greatness of eternity." ²⁾ So far from being conceited he must be humble. "Not that he should fawn over the rich or be servile in the presence of those who have power or place, or pander to those who may be able to promote his interests. Humility is not a matter of the bowed head or

²⁾ Gordon, George A., *Op. cit.*, p. 275.

lowered eyes or a generally dispirited attitude. Humility, in the sense of Christ's manner of life, lay in the absolute surrender of the soul to God and the realization of His Will as the most vital of its concerns. Humility before God is not the cessation of any single practice or the consecration of any earthly possession. It includes the practices and things of life, but it is more. It is to take this warm, intimate, and infinitely precious soul, and with no reservations surrender it to God that His Will may be wrought in it. It is to give up one's life, to die to self, and to live again for God. This is the test of humility — whether or not the minister has found his life in losing it for Christ's sake." ³⁾

A Christian minister should never engage in ecclesiastical politics. There is little that is more disgusting than to see ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ practicing the methods of ward politicians. And do not forget the special obligation of a minister to lead a blameless life. I know very well that all Christians should but ministers can not escape a special responsibility here. God will not excuse a man from living blamelessly because he is not a clergyman, but there can be no doubt that His displeasure rests in an especial manner upon the minister of the gospel who brings a double measure of shame upon the cause

³⁾ Wilson, Matthew H., *Seven Professions and the Teachings of Jesus*, Phila., 1925, p. 105. On this point see further my talk on "Humility" elsewhere in this volume.

of Jesus Christ by being guilty of offences that are shocking to the moral sense of decent-minded people.

Lastly, "the ministry is much more than a profession which may be entered because of moral earnestness, a pleasing address, belief in the worth of the gospel message, and willingness to serve in a public capacity. The minister is called of God to do this special work. That call is not limited to the invitation given in the Scriptures in which men are commanded to go into all the world and win all men to a confession of Christ as Savior. The call is direct to the heart of the minister himself. There is often a holy unrest which may amount to agony of soul in which he is generally aware that it may be God's will for him to preach the gospel. When he surrenders to this divine call, he is then assured that such is the plan of God for him. This anguish of spirit may not be felt in every instance. There may be but a quiet insistence in his life that he should become a preacher. Men are called of God through the use of means near at hand, such as the influence of godly parents, or pastors, or Christian workers, or even without the use of any immediate human agency. Innumerable forces may be brought to bear upon the minister, and of these influences he may be conscious in varying degrees, but all ministers should know that God has called them and that they have received their commission to preach directly from Him. Here the selection of the ministry as a life service differs from

entrance into all other occupations. Not only natural gifts but also the question of God's invitation to the minister to become an undershepherd with the great Shepherd of the flock of God must be taken into consideration." ⁴⁾

Many of you young men are looking forward to the ministry as your life work. You could dedicate yourself to no higher task. I would not discourage one of you by any word of mine. Only do not drift into the work, do not enter upon it lightly. Assure yourself that God has called you to just this task, and then let nothing daunt you, not what men may say or think, not even your own shortcomings and limitations, nothing. Listen to John Bunyan: "But I first could not believe that God should speak by me to the heart of any man, still counting myself unworthy, however, though of myself of all the saints the most unworthy; yet I, but with great fear and trembling at the sight of my own weakness, did set upon the work, and did according to my gift, and the proportion of my faith, preach that blessed gospel that God had showed me in the holy word of truth." ⁵⁾ And what a blessed ministry was his thus entered upon. His reward as that of every true minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ will be great. But then when by and by you are privileged to be engaged in so glorious a task do not complain over-much of its difficulties, or of insufficient appreciation, rather rejoice with our same

⁴⁾ Wilson, *Idem.*, p. 95.

⁵⁾ *Grace Abounding*, par. 271, 273.

Bunyan when he says: "My heart hath been so wrapped up in the glory of this excellent work, that I counted myself more blessed and honoured of God by this, than if He had made me the emperor of the Christian world, or the lord of all the glory of the earth without it." ⁶⁾ Listen to one who after fifty-seven years in the ministry could admonish a group of theological students to this effect:

"In preaching and in pastoral service you will have trials and deprivations, but do not allow any man to pity you. Above all, do not get into the habit of pitying yourself. A grumbling parson who is always moaning over the hardships of his lot is a pitiable object. Of course he has trials; so has the merchant, so has the banker, and where they have one compensation the true minister of Christ has ten. Think what it means to have one's mind engrossed with the noblest thoughts, hands and heart occupied in the worthiest service, dealing not with mere things like the merchant nor with symbols of things like the banker, but with immortal souls that have in them the power of an endless life. Why, if I should awake some fine morning and find myself a captain of industry or a Napoleon of finance confronted with his tasks, I should be tempted to ask, 'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this?' Glory in your ministry and thank God continually for the privilege of such service." ⁷⁾

⁶⁾ *Idem.*, par. 286.

⁷⁾ Alexander, George. *The Glory of the Ministry*, in *Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, vol. 21, No. 3, p. 4.

XX

THE TEACHER

Luther once said that if he were not a preacher he would want to be a teacher, and he was not sure but that being a teacher — he clearly meant a Christian teacher — is an even more responsible and influential position than that of the preacher, for, said he, a teacher forms whereas a minister only too often can only reform.

I am not going to waste the little time I have this morning in magnifying the importance of the teacher's task. We all realize it at least in part, or, if we do not, we need stop to think but a moment in order to realize it. The teacher, from kindergarten through college, is engaged, or at least should be engaged, not only in imparting knowledge but especially in establishing habits and ideals. And it is these that determine the character of adult lives.

After what I said about elementary school teachers in my talk on, "What is a Profession?" it may seem strange to some of you that I should include teaching in the professions. There is in this, however, nothing contradictory. I want to point out that there is a very real difference between these two questions, namely, is teaching a profession? and, are teachers professional? The fact that I gave a negative answer to the latter

question does not in any way hinder me from replying in the affirmative to the former. Teaching is a profession whether our teachers here and now are or are not professional.

In view of what I said in my second paragraph it is important that those of you who expect to teach before entering upon so responsible a task inquire into your fitness. What qualifications should you possess? I discussed this at some length a dozen of years ago before the Michigan Christian Teachers' Institute, conducted in this city. I shall give you now the substance of what I said at that time.

The first qualification of a teacher is knowledge. That is patent enough. So patent that at least today it is seldom lost sight of. We need not, then, ask why the teacher should possess knowledge — our common sense tells us that — but the question that remains is, how much knowledge should the teacher possess? And the answer must needs be relative. It is not the same for the college professor as it is for the high school teacher; neither the same for the latter as it is for the teacher in the grammar school; nor the same for the principal of such a school as it is for a teacher in the grades. But whatever rank a given teacher may have, knowledge is imperative, knowledge proportionate to his scholastic position.

Neither does it suffice if the teacher knows as much as he is to teach. A friend of mine once told me of a certain Dutch headmaster who, though he had never learned the English lan-

guage, undertook to teach it to a neighbor. He succeeded in doing this, according to my friend, by managing to keep a lesson in advance of his pupil. This sounds very pretty but I venture to assert that no Englishman or American would have understood much of the neighbor's English. Teaching is not so simple an affair. To teach the first steps of any art or science you must have taken them yourself, and some of the advanced steps besides. To teach little you must know much. To teach third grade arithmetic well you must be able to teach that of the eighth grade, and if you are to do that well you cannot afford to be ignorant of algebra and geometry.

Furthermore, mastery of your subjects will aid you remarkably in maintaining discipline. In the first place, your pupils will respect you for your knowledge. That is much. And then your eyes are free. If you are so dependent upon your textbook that you must study it before questioning your pupil, and must study it again to see if he has answered correctly, I say, if you are thus dependent how can you expect to have order? The mischievous pupil dreads your eye more than your arm. Therefore see to it that it is not in bondage to your textbook. It will not be if you have the knowledge you should have before turning to your task.

Then, again, there is the element of interest. Mr. Chesterton has said somewhere, I think in his *Heretics*, that there is no such thing as an uninteresting subject, there are only uninterested

people. It is profoundly true. All you need to do to become interested in a given subject is study it thoroughly enough. And interest begets enthusiasm which in turn begets interest, for Fichte well said: "Es siegt immer und notwendig die Begeisterung über den der nicht begeistert ist." There is just one and only one way of holding the attention of your pupils — arouse interest. You can arouse this by promising all who do not learn a sound threshing. That is one way. You can also arouse it by being yourself interested, which, however, is possible only on the basis of knowledge.

Lastly, as teachers you must have a broad and deep knowledge of the subjects you teach — broad and deep, of course, as compared with what your pupils are to learn — if you are to teach with the proper perspective. Lacking this you cannot know what to emphasize, what to slight, and what to omit entirely. For a lesson is like a picture. If you study such a picture as, for example, Munkacsy's *Christ Before Pilate*, you will see that the figures are by no means all painted with the same degree of care. Those in the foreground upon whom the light falls are represented with the utmost nicety of detail, whereas those in the background, who merely fill in the scene, are brushed in with apparent abandon. So in teaching a lesson only he who has ample knowledge can distinguish between the essential and non-essential, between the important and the unimportant, and arrange his teaching accordingly.

Let us be especially on our guard against the notion, which though moribund still survives, that we must have well-equipped teachers for the higher grades but that any clever grammar school graduate can teach the lower classes. As long ago as 1882 Huxley, in an address on *Science and Art in Relation to Education*¹⁾ said emphatically:

“There are a great many people who imagine that elementary teaching might be properly carried out by teachers provided with only elementary knowledge. Let me assure you that that is the profoundest mistake in the world. There is nothing so difficult to do as to write a good elementary book and there is nobody so hard to teach properly and well as people who know nothing about a subject.”

* * *

Are we ready now to pass on to our second essential? Many would think so. Yet we are not. Ample knowledge of the subject taught though essential to teaching is not enough. We must know more. Unfortunately many do not realize this. Yet I am convinced that for everyone who fails in teaching because of ignorance of subject-matter, more fail because of ignorance of something else, because of ignorance of the object of education — the pupil.

The great majority of, let us say, sixth grade teachers, are keenly alive to the fact that they cannot properly perform their task unless they

¹⁾ Reprinted in *Essays for College Men*, N. Y., 1913.

have a thorough knowledge of sixth grade work, but many there are to whom it has never occurred that knowledge of sixth grade children is every bit as vital. Animal trainers never commit this error. They could not afford to. Read Bostock's, *The Training of Wild Animals*,²⁾ a book that contains much sound pedagogy — and you will see that the animal trainer not only knows precisely what he wants to teach his pupils, but especially and above all does he know his pupils. Not only is he familiar with the traits common to all wild animals, over and above that he knows just how the lion differs from the tiger, the bear from the elephant. He knows more. He knows every individual pupil. No two lions are alike anymore than any two leaves or any two boys are alike. So our animal trainer knows just how this particular lion or tiger differs from every other lion or tiger among his pupils. He knows the eccentricities, the virtues, the faults, the likes and dislikes of every animal under his care. He is ignorant of these things at the peril of his life. I ask, should not many a teacher go to the animal trainer, consider his ways and be wise?

The teacher must know the child. He must begin by seeing that the child is no homunculus, no duodecimo edition of the parental folio. The child has anatomical, physiological, psychological characteristics peculiarly its own, differing from

2) New York, 1903.

the adult not only quantitatively but qualitatively as well.

You must know your pupils collectively and individually. I do not say that, though desirable, a course in child-study is a prerequisite without which you cannot hope to succeed in teaching; but this much is certain that whether you get to know your pupil by deliberate study, or whether you mainly fathom him by the power of intuition, you cannot afford to rest till you know your boys and girls, your Johns and Marys, as the animal trainer knows collectively and individually the pupils that come to him from desert and jungle.

* * *

Thus far I am sure we are agreed. The teacher must have knowledge, knowledge of both the subject and the object of education. But that is not enough. Indeed, he may know both, know them well, and still fail ignominiously as teacher, simply because he does not know how to communicate the subject-matter he knows so well to the pupil whom he may know even better. In plain English, he cannot teach. That I am about to give an exhaustive analysis of just what is denoted by the significant phrase, "the ability to teach," I do not pretend. I do believe that I can point out what is essential. The first thing to be noted is that the ability to teach arises from two sources — birth and training. Training of some sort is indispensable. It need not necessarily be normal training, though desirable, but training in some

school, be it in no other than that of experience, is essential. It is only by teaching that anybody, it matters not how gifted, can learn to teach efficiently. This is sufficient justification for the preference school boards invariably evidence for experienced teachers. However, important though training is, no amount of training can take the place of native talent. Lacking this the best sort of normal training avails little or nothing. I am even prepared to defend the thesis that the more experience some teachers who lack talent get, the worse teachers they become. All training and experience can do is to develop native aptitudes and show how these may be applied. This native gift may vary much. One teacher has little aptitude, another much, but if one is to succeed at all some there must be to begin with. In the last analysis every real teacher is what the Germans call a "Schulmeister von Gottes gnaden," that is, a teacher by the grace of God.

He who is to instruct needs knowledge, knowledge of the subject he is to teach and of the pupil to whom it is to be imparted. In addition he must possess the ability to teach. And that is all. Nothing more, it seems to me, is necessary. But he who is to educate needs more, needs more just because to educate is more than to instruct. Instruction has accomplished its purpose when it imparts to the pupil a certain amount of knowledge and skill. It appeals to the intellect. Education goes much farther. It endeavors to form the character of the pupil. Now, of course, it

is impossible really to instruct without influencing character. Every instructor is to a certain extent an educator. That is why Herbart speaks of "erziehenden Unterricht." So, while in practice it is quite impossible sharply to distinguish between instruction and education, the distinction should be sufficiently evident.

It must be obvious now what I mean when I say that he who is to educate needs more than knowledge and the ability to teach. Since the noblest function of the teacher is not merely to instruct but to educate, not merely to impart knowledge but to mold character, it is obvious that another essential requisite in a teacher is character. We would not or should not even dream of entrusting our children to a man without character, just because we want an educator for our children. And no man without character can fill that office.

Now I cannot, though I would, enter here upon anything like a psychological analysis of what we mean by character. Horne goes so far as to say that after naming it as an essential qualification probably the less said about the teacher's character the better.³⁾ This much should be said, however, that if character is as Maher defines it, "the total collection of a man's acquired moral habits grafted into his natural temperament"⁴⁾—which appears to me as good a definition as any, — then

³⁾ *Psychological Principles of Education*, N. Y., 1907, p. 53.

⁴⁾ *Psychology*, 6th ed., N. Y., 1909, p. 391.

it should be obvious that we cannot be satisfied that our teachers should have only what is generally called a good character. We must not forget that I am speaking of the qualifications of a Christian teacher. Our third essential qualification, therefore, must be sound Christian character. Now I know that no school board can look into a candidate's heart to see if he has experienced new-birth. All it can go by is the candidate's profession and reputation. But I am not speaking to a school board. I am addressing prospective teachers, and to them I would say that psychologically considered, it is essential to the highest success that you should be Christians not only by profession but in very truth. You should be this precisely because you are called upon to mold the character of your pupils, and you cannot mold character by appealing to the intellect only. Your pupils must feel that your Christianity is something in your heart as well as in your head. I say they must feel this. The intuition of children often is astonishingly acute. They search your very soul, and if, consciously or unconsciously, they conclude that your Christianity is of your head only, you cannot exercise a powerful influence in developing in them Christian character.

One point remains for consideration. Logically it is out of place here. Logically it comes under our first head — knowledge of subject-matter. But I have deliberately reserved its discussion to the end. It is this:

We use the term Christian, when we speak of

Christian schools and teachers, in a more specific sense than the term itself warrants. A school based upon the principles advanced by the Lutheran Church, even a Roman Catholic school, is Christian. Yet we are not thinking of these when we speak of Christian schools. We have, in a sense at least, usurped the term for schools based upon Reformed principles. This being the case it is evident that an essential qualification of a Christian teacher, meaning Reformed Christian, must be a knowledge of Reformed principles. Over and above the knowledge required of teachers in general he must be familiar with the principles which he is supposed to inculcate. And if what I have said under point one is true, he must know more about these principles than he is called upon to teach. This is no small matter, yet our Christian schools expect even more, and justly, of their teachers. They expect not only that the teachers shall know the principles for which these schools stand, but that they shall be able to teach the subject-matter of instruction in the light of these principles. They not only expect their teachers to teach history, geography, nature study, and Reformed doctrine; they expect them to teach history, geography, and so forth, in the light of Reformed doctrine. Now how many among you will be able to do this?

Do you think that in a year, or at most two, you will be ready? If not, should you not exert yourself to the utmost to equip yourself at least to some extent for so high a calling? Do not rest by

and by on your diploma from Calvin, and your certificate from the State of Michigan. The late Prof. Ladd of Yale in his, *A Teacher's Practical Philosophy* says: "I wish especially to emphasize that it is the obligation of the teacher to be always learning, if not from the love of learning as a gratification of the noble thirst for knowledge, at least from the conscientious conviction that constant learning is indispensable for successful teaching; and, as well, that the development of knowledge in the race makes constant learning necessary to the claim to know anything at all, really and to good purpose." ⁵⁾

Nothing could be more true. If the teacher is not a student, if he does not read something more than newspapers and magazines, whatever knowledge he may once have had will shrivel and atrophy, and ere long he will be one of those who teach the same old subjects in the same old way; and he will be about as inspiring as the minister, who once having made his barrel of sermons now deserts his study, and regales his audiences year after year upon the same old homilies. The whole of Chaucer's familiar line should be true of every teacher, namely, "and gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche." Gladly learn as well as gladly teach.

Our schools need more teachers who have capacities that will bring them far greater financial returns in some other profession, who give

⁵⁾ New York, 1911, p. 164.

themselves to teaching as their life's vocation because the work appeals to them, because they regard it as their God-given calling, because they see its reward. Yes, because they see its reward.

This is not irony. Teaching has its compensations. Not in the form of princely incomes. Fortunately money is generally the last thing a teacher thinks of as he goes about his work. Neither is it his chief reward. The love of his pupils, their devotion to him throughout life, the knowledge that he has helped to ennoble many a character, possibly even been instrumental in attaching one jewel to the Master's crown, the approval of his conscience, and, above all the approval of his God, these, these are the teacher's real reward.

XXI

THE PHYSICIAN

There are few stories more interesting than that of the evolution of the science of medicine (including surgery), especially that of the nineteenth century. Our present-day medicine is a beautiful illustration, indeed, I doubt if there is a better, of the interdependence of the sciences. Were it not for the development of the science of bacteriology medicine and surgery could have advanced little beyond their status of a century ago. Today both have been revolutionized. When Leeuwenhoek for the first time in history saw bacteria, when Spallanzani for the first time isolated a single specimen, neither they nor anybody else divined the relation of these organisms to disease; but when Pasteur made his epoch-making researches into the nature and cause of fermentation it occurred to Lister of England — and just here lies his genius — that conceivably the microorganisms that Pasteur found, or others similar, might cause all the mischief that made the outcome of surgical interference so uncertain. With Lister's first crude attempts at operating under antiseptic conditions we have the beginning of modern surgery, which in a few brief years has made such progress that it has enabled the surgeon to explore practically every part of the hu-

man body. Neither has the significance of bacteriology limited itself to surgery, but the whole of our modern medicine rests very largely upon the same science. Now that we have learned to apply our bacteriological knowledge we are fairly on the road to conquering all the infectious diseases. Diseases like diphtheria, typhoid fever, Asiatic cholera, and yellow fever, once most dreaded are now rapidly approaching the vanishing point, and others like tuberculosis no longer inspire quite the old dread. One would almost wish that contrary to the best medical opinion cancer might be a germ disease, for then, it would seem, we might even sooner expect to learn just how to combat it.

And so medicine, once almost wholly empirical, is beginning to attain the status of a true science, thus acquiring a new fascination for many. I confess it has always had a certain appeal for me. The rapid development of the field is giving rise to all manner of specialties and specialists which though unavoidable has not, however, been all to the good, your specialist often being too prone to find only that for which he seeks. Were our general practitioners ever to disappear there would, in some respects at least, be a positive loss. Of them, especially the country type, I know no finer picture than that of MacClure in Ian Maclaren's *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*. Rugged, brusque, but withall possessing a heart of gold; unsparing of those who called him for a mere indisposition but willing to sacrifice himself to the utmost for

the man or woman in extremity, MacClure comes near being the very incarnation of the ideal physician. Maclaren describes him in more detail as follows:

"There were no specialists in Drumtochty, so this man had to do everything as best he could, and as quickly. He was chest doctor and doctor for every other organ as well; he was accoucheur and surgeon; he was oculist and aurist; he was dentist and chloroformist besides being chemist and druggist. He did his best for the need of every man, woman, and child in this wild, straggling district, year in, year out, in the snow and in the heat, in the dark and in the light, without rest, and without holiday for forty years. He could ride faster, stay longer in the saddle, and had a firmer grip with his knees than anyone I ever met, and did so all for mercy's sake. When the reapers in harvest time saw a figure whirling past in a cloud of dust, or the family at the foot of Glen Urtach, gathering round the fire on a winter's night, heard the rattle of a horse's hoofs on the road, or the shepherds, out after the sheep, traced a black speck moving across the snow to the upper glen, they knew it was the doctor, and, without being conscious of it, wished him God-speed."¹)

I am happy myself to have known in my boyhood a doctor of this type, one whose memory I delight to honor, and whose name I am, there-

¹) Page 240 of the Grosset & Dunlap edition.

fore, going to mention here and now — Thomas Huizenga, of Zeeland, Michigan. He was an excellent physician and a born surgeon performing major operations of which no professional surgeon need be ashamed. Had he chosen to come to town he might have found fame and fortune, but like MacClure he preferred to labor among his own people. He was a quiet, unassuming, god-fearing man. Even now I can see him traveling our country roads in what we used to call a sulky — a two-wheeled cart resembling that of a jockey — his medicine case slung underneath the seat. (In looking up the word sulky in the *Century Dictionary* to make sure of my spelling, I was interested to find this quotation from Whittier:

“ ‘A country doctor

Whose ancient sulky down the village lanes,
Dragged, like a warcar, captive ills and
pains’ ”).

Huizenga in his many years of practice must have covered thousands upon thousands of miles in all kinds of wind and weather, and in all seasons of the year. The roads when dry covered him with dust, when wet were almost impassable, and in winter occasionally might prove wholly so. I trust the man has now entered upon the rest so often denied him here.

Now, since I desire to give guidance to those of you who are thinking of medicine as a career, I shall discuss briefly the qualifications a physician, in my opinion, should possess. The first

qualification should be a sound body, especially for the man who goes into general practice, and with general practice every physician should begin, it matters not what specialty he may have ultimately in view. The successful general practitioner must be able to stand a wear and tear that come to but few. Furthermore, the public has precious little confidence in the physician whose appearance suggests that he himself needs medical attendance.

He needs a stout heart. A physician frequently is faced by emergencies when he must take his courage into both his hands. He may not quail. He may not quail even when an epidemic comes to his community so dread that all who can flee the town. He must remain, his danger all the greater because he is bound to be overworked, in which condition he is, of course, all the more susceptible to infection. But flinch he must not, and be it said to the enduring honor of the profession, it is a thing unheard of that a physician deserts his post. Did he, he would forever be ostracized by his brethren.

He should have a high degree of confidence in himself. Modesty is in every way as becoming to medical men as to anybody else, and has characterized some of the greatest lights of the profession, as, for example, that prince among physicians, Sir William Osler. The physician who both knows and realizes of how much his science still is ignorant, who is aware too of his own limitations in both knowledge and skill, who is conscious of the fact that even the greatest and best make

mistaken diagnoses, need not be told to be modest. But he must have no inferiority complex, his modesty must not be of the hesitant sort, for how can a man inspire confidence in others who lacks it in himself? Yet the first thing a physician who is to accomplish anything needs is the confidence of his patient.

The physician needs psychological insight. Because they lack this many well-trained physicians fail of the highest success. I do not believe that academic psychology avails very much; what the physician needs is intuitive insight into people's souls. Physicians today are altogether too prone to lean for diagnosis wholly upon a physical examination. If this is negative they declare that nothing ails the patient. Many physicians seem to be wholly oblivious of the fact that people have souls as well as bodies, souls that exert the profoundest influence upon bodies, souls that themselves may be diseased. As one of their own number has said: "The divorce of the mental from the physical has been the source of grievous errors."²⁾ This error at least the psychoanalysts do not commit.

The average successful physician's day is a sorry story. All afternoon in his office he listens to his patients' tales of woe; all morning and probably much of the evening he listens to more such tales from people too ill to come to the office. To counteract the depressing effect of all this he

²⁾ Campbell, C. Macfie. *Delusion and Belief*, Cambridge, 1926, p. 5.

should possess a certain temperamental optimism, which enables him to throw off the burden of gloom that threatens to overwhelm him. The consciousness that God overrules all and that even for the victims of sinful lives there is the possibility of redemption can help to ward off the pessimism that might otherwise engulf him.

Lastly, he should possess profound sympathy for suffering humanity. I do not mean what often passes for sympathy. There are physicians who have an especial appeal for a certain type of women that fairly ooze sympathy. It drips from them. As a rule men despise them. When I speak of sympathy I mean that of a brusque MacClure of Drumtochty and of a silent Huizenga of Zeeland. Of course, a physician should be courteous. Why not? However, who would not be willing to overlook a certain external brusqueness in a doctor to whom one knows one can tie when in real need? Your old-school physician knew his people, had officiated at the arrival of many, knew their every circumstance, and rather than see Smith lose his wife or Brown that lad or lassie would give his very heart's blood to save them. That is what I mean by sympathy. I do not mean honeyed words. Neither do I mean to imply that this sort of sympathy can be found only in the country doctor. It has characterized some of the very greatest men of the profession in every generation. By common consent there was probably no greater physician in his day than the late Sir William Osler, yet we read of him that he pos-

sessed "an infinite compassion and tenderness towards his humankind."³⁾ And our own Walter Reed after lifting the impenetrable veil that had surrounded the cause of that terrible scourge, yellow fever, at ten minutes before midnight of the last day of the year 1900 exclaimed in a letter to his wife: "The prayer that has been mine for twenty years, that I might be permitted in some way or at some time to do something to alleviate human suffering has been granted!"⁴⁾

It is sometimes forgotten that the physician is engaged in the very own work of our Lord and Master. Even he who runs can read in the Gospels that much of Jesus' time was given to works of healing, and the Gospels themselves tell us that relatively few are recorded. Jesus had a profoundly sympathetic heart that went out to all in pain and distress. That he is engaged in the self-same work as his Master should inspire every Christian physician. Of Christian physicians we need more. There is nothing in medicine itself, whatever one may say of medical schools, why so many Christian parents should oppose their sons entering upon medicine as a calling. It is a divine calling whose appeal many a Christian is bound to feel. I remember as if it were yesterday that one of our seminary preparatory students long

³⁾ Harvey Cushing in his introduction to Osler's, *The Old Humanities and the the New Science*, Boston, 1920, p. XX.

⁴⁾ Quoted by Harvey Cushing. *Life of Sir William Osler*, Oxford, 1925, vol. I, p. 542.

ago came to me for counsel. For reasons I need not narrate here he had to abandon all thought of the ministry to his no small regret. He thereupon chose medicine because of its opportunities for service, has never regretted his choice, and is distinguishing himself today as a truly Christian physician.

In conclusion I want to say just this. Because life will frequently depend on your knowledge and skill you cannot afford to get any but the very best training, which, of course, is to be had only in our best medical schools. These are crowded and they select their students with care. Unless you have made a good record in college you need not hope to gain admission. Furthermore, the medical course today is the stiffest course on the campus. If you are unable to get good standings at college you must not expect to make the grade in the medical school. My advice is that you abandon all thought of a professional career. Turn to some craft or some line of business for which you may have aptitude. It is better to be a good carpenter or bricklayer than a poor doctor, or lawyer, or minister.



XXII

THE LAWYER

It is difficult to classify the professions in the order of their importance. Certainly one of the very greatest and noblest of them all is the law, and that because it concerns itself with justice, an attribute of Godhead. It is a great pity that so noble a profession has fallen so low in the esteem of the public. For many the term lawyer denotes one who will not only plead with equal warmth either side of a case, but who will stop at nothing to win it be his client innocent or guilty. Even attorneys for the State whose exclusive concern should be to see that so far as in them lies justice is done often seem bent only upon conviction.

The interminable delays in modern practice so disastrously displayed in the Sacco-Vanzetti case have done much to bring our courts and the law into disrepute. The only encouraging element in the whole situation is that not a few of the leaders at the bar are no longer blind to current evils, and that some of them, notably Chief Justice Taft of the United States Supreme Court, are preaching reform.

However, these things do not directly concern me this morning. My present concern is to give you some notion of the law as a profession and of the qualifications indispensable to its practice. In

my conversations with students I find that some have a very mistaken conception of the nature of the lawyer's work. They seem to think that the lawyer spends most of his time in court engaged in dramatic examinations and cross-examinations of witnesses, and in making dramatic appeals to juries. Now the life of the ordinary lawyer is about as different from that as any life can be.

In the main there are two classes of practice — court and office. Many lawyers do not get into court oftener than a few times in a whole year and some very successful lawyers never get into court at all. Such lawyers "examine the validity of title to property for persons about to make purchase; they draw up wills, contracts, corporation papers, or other legal documents; they act as trustees for estates in cases calling for legal training, as administrators and executors of estates, as guardians over minors, as collectors of accounts for individuals or for corporations, as general advisers on questions of law, or as legislative agents."¹)

Young men who go into the law must expect in the main to engage in this kind of practice, about as undramatic and uninspiring as anything can well be. For that matter little is less dramatic than many a court trial. Not seldom the atmosphere of the courtroom becomes positively soporific.

I say these things not to disparage the law.

¹) Allen, Frederick J., *Law as a Vocation*, Cambridge, 1924, p. 7.

Why should I wish to? I say them because so many a young man entertains utterly erroneous notions concerning the ordinary lawyer's ordinary day. Allen, in his excellent little book from which I have already quoted says, "as in all occupations nine-tenths of the work is what may be called routine work, or even drudgery. This cannot be escaped. The lawyer does not spend his time in preparing and delivering eloquent orations. As in other occupations, the really interesting work, full of perpetual zest, is usually a small part of the whole." ²⁾

What qualifications should the lawyer possess? It is impossible to answer this question as it stands because the trial lawyer and the office lawyer require almost opposite qualifications — qualifications so different that one cannot expect to find them in one and the same person. "How can one expect to combine, for example, the rapidity of thought, the promptitude of decision, the large knowledge of the world required of the advocate, with the slow judgment, the patient study of the books and of the statutes, the laborious plodding over papers and accounts, and the tedious attention to detail that is required of the office lawyer?" ³⁾

England recognizes these facts and divides its lawyers into two classes, barristers and solicitors, only the former being permitted to appear in

²⁾ *Idem.*, p. 13.

³⁾ Wellman, Francis L., *Day in Court*, N. Y., 1921, p. 14.

court, the latter limiting themselves to office practice.

In discussing the qualifications of the lawyer I shall confine myself to the court lawyer, both because of limitations of time and because he represents the branch of the law that seems to challenge most young men who think at all of the law as a career.

For the advocate a first requirement is a strong body. The physical strain of a long trial for the lawyer in charge of a case is simply tremendous. If you lack a strong physique you had better turn to something else.

A good voice, I did not say a beautiful voice, is indispensable.

A trial lawyer should be able to think quickly.

He must be able to cram — to assimilate knowledge to be used for a specific occasion quickly. I have been amazed at the detailed knowledge of abstruse technical matters such as anatomy, toxicology, and the like, some lawyers can work up in an astonishingly short time.

A trial lawyer must be a ready debater, quick to see and to take advantage of any vulnerable point in an opponent's case.

Such a lawyer must have much self-confidence and undaunted courage.

Lastly, the question arises, may a Christian lawyer defend the guilty? He may, of course he may, but it seems to me only in so far as to see to it that be he ever so guilty and be his offence ever so great the accused gets justice.

If you are thinking of making the law your career distinguish between its two branches and assure yourself that you possess the qualifications for that branch which you expect to choose. Furthermore, I know that each profession has its own peculiar temptations but it seems to me the temptations to become crooked are greater in this profession than in any other. You should, therefore, examine yourself closely to make sure that you possess the moral stamina necessary to resist these temptations.

XXIII

HOW LONG A PROCESS IS EDUCATION?

I shall endeavor briefly to answer the question I have set myself. Quite commonly education is identified with schooling. When a man leaves school we say he has completed his education. I find no fault with this use of the word, provided we do not lose sight of the fact that, strictly speaking, education cannot be identified with schooling at all. Education is a life-process, our whole life being one continuous education. That is why I have always so whole-heartedly admired the title of Henry Adams' autobiography, *The Education of Henry Adams*.¹⁾ How clever that title and how profound. The book does not close, as some would expect, with the writer's graduation from college, not at all, it continues the story till almost the close of life. In so far forth Adams had a sound conception of the meaning of the word education. Sir William Osler in his charming essay on *Student Life* well says: "The hardest conviction to get into the mind of a beginner is that the education upon which he is engaged is not a college course, but a life course, for which the work of a few years under teachers is but a preparation."²⁾

¹⁾ New York, 1918.

²⁾ In *Modern Essays*, ed. by Christopher Morley, N. Y., 1921, p. 132.

Well, if our education does not come to its close when we leave school, then when does it end? When we die? Not if we are Christians. Certainly not. What makes heaven heaven? Crystal fountains, harps and streets of gold, pearly gates? I believe one can very easily over-emphasize this picture of heaven, indeed, considering how materially minded we are the danger is by no means imaginary. After all it is not these things that make heaven what it is. What makes heaven heaven is that we shall meet there one day, if we get there at all, which may God grant, not only our dear ones who have gone before, but Abraham, and Moses, and David, and Isaiah, and St. Paul, and John whom Jesus loved, and St. Augustine, and Luther, and Calvin. And will not that be a wonderful education to listen in on a conversation between Luther and the apostle James, and Calvin and the apostle Paul? Most marvelous of all, we shall see face to face the glorified Savior who made all this possible for sinners.³⁾

³⁾ Since giving this talk in chapel I have read the following in Clarence E. Macartney's, *Putting on Immortality*, (N. Y., 1926), which I cannot refrain from quoting here. Indeed, had not my talk antedated by a year the publication of Macartney's book, I might even have been suspected of plagiarism. The quotation follows:

"I have sometimes been asked, 'Whom, above all others would you like to see in heaven?' Of course, we put Christ above all the rest, and after Christ our own beloved friends. After one has seen face to face the Saviour who died for him, and then has greeted his family, which one of the noble dead will he first wish to see? For my-

My heartfelt wish is that one day, each in our turn, we may all graduate from the school of life into the school of heaven, where many a problem that seems so insoluble here will find a happy solution, and we shall see and hear, "what eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither hath entered into the heart of man."

Oh, my young friends, can you not now understand why ever and again some saint almost impatiently cries out: "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly"?

self, the answer would be Saint Paul. After Christ he was the most influential man who has lived on this earth. Whether one takes him in his intellect, or in his affections, or in his achievements, he stands without a peer. I have often wondered what Paul looked like. Then I shall see him face to face. Of the Old Testament characters, the one I would like to see above all others is David, the sweet singer of Israel. Think of looking into the face of him whose music has charmed the ear of so many generations of men, the man who wrote the twenty-third Psalm! And after David, grand old Elijah. What meetings with the great and illustrious of all time! What unfolding of the secrets which time could not teach us!"

XXIV

THE PROPER FUNCTION OF CALVIN
COLLEGE

Woodrow Wilson begins his now classic essay on, *What is a College For?* with these words:

"It may seem singular that at this time of day and in this confident century it should be necessary to ask, What is a college for?"

True, and yet I believe that each generation should confront itself anew with this important question, if for no other reason than to remind itself definitely as to just what is the proper function of college. It was not for nothing that Aristotle always was so insistent upon inquiring into the function of things, for a knowledge of just this we must have if we are to be just in our demands and expectations. It is so with our own College. Unless we know its proper function we are bound to expect either too much or too little.

Now let us note, first of all, that Calvin is one college among many, all having certain functions in common since they inhere in the very idea college. Thus, in the first place, we expect of a college that it will impart to its students a certain amount of knowledge. College, let us not forget, is a place of study. Your first duty as students is study — not, mark you, to engage in athletics, or in social activities, or in mission work at the jail, or in the earning of a living. Trite

though it may sound we should insist that college, especially, too, Calvin College, continue to be a place of study. In all study books play a great role. One of the very first buildings on a college campus should be that housing the library, and it is, therefore, not only an evidence of generosity but of good judgment as well, that a certain Grand Rapids family is about to erect such a building on our grounds. It is true, men are wont to speak slightly of "mere book-learning," and there is a sense in which the expression is justifiable. There is knowledge not to be found in books, knowledge that can be learned from experience only, that can be acquired only by living a full and varied life rich in joys and sorrows. This much granted remember that all learning is book-learning. When the chemist discovers a new element, the biologist a new species, the bacteriologist a new bacillus, the astronomer a new star, the explorer a new river, one and all they hasten to put it into print, indeed, the haste to print often is so great that the discoverer, or the would-be discoverer, fails to take time to verify the correctness of his observations or conclusions. There are some fine illustrations of this fact in Paul De Kruif's new book on *Microbe Hunters*.¹⁾ How important book-learning is I illustrated, if I remember well, from this very platform just a year ago by saying that if our whole present-day civilization should perish overnight with the exception of a knowledge of the English language, and the fur-

¹⁾ New York, 1926.

ther exception of a complete set of the last edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* including the supplementary volumes, then even a thousand years hence men would be able to get a very definite notion of our own age from this one book alone.

The first function of a college is to impart knowledge. General knowledge. College is a place for instruction in the liberal arts, not in the professions. It is needful that we keep this in mind, also at Calvin, because one is amazed when one reads some college catalogues and sees what courses can be offered to satisfy the requirements for graduation. Surely, we want chemistry taught, indeed, I have even on occasion urged students to take at least one course in chemistry, but I hope the faculty will stand as adamant against ever introducing courses in industrial chemistry. Surely, we want to give mathematics a place of honor in our curriculum but not engineering; we want our students to get a sound conception of Reformed doctrine but we do not want to train theologians. This is not said in disparagement of the industrial chemist, or of the engineer, or of the theologian. Not at all. I am only insisting that it is not the function of college to give this training. Once such insistence would have been supererogatory. Today not. Not even at Calvin. Permit me to illustrate. Many of the graduates of this college go into teaching. The State of Michigan offers them a certificate to teach provided they have taken a certain number of hours of education — using this term now in its nar-

rower sense. Now I do not object to this provided such courses are mainly courses in psychology and in the principles and history of education — which latter can as truly be made a cultural course as say the history of philosophy — but in meetings with our state superintendent of public instruction and elsewhere I have consistently opposed raising the required number of hours, because I realize that this increase means professional training, which does not belong in a college course. Note well, again, I am not opposed to the professional training of teachers, I favor it, but I dislike to give college credit for it. Doubtless circumstances will force us to give in, but, if so, then we must endeavor to keep all professional training to the irreducible minimum. The late beloved dean of Harvard College was right when he said: "The danger of a college education may once have been the danger of the monastery; now it is the danger of the polytechnic shop." ²⁾ Let us be on our guard against this danger.

The duty of imparting knowledge to its students lies with every college, but in this connection Calvin has a special duty to perform, namely, it should aim to give its students a knowledge of and a love for the Calvinistic life and world view. For this purpose it has been called into existence. It does not perform this function simply by giving some instruction in Bible, Reformed doctrine, Church history, and some lectures on Calvinism.

²⁾ Briggs, Le B. R., *Men, Women, and Colleges*, N. Y., 1925, p. 93.

It does this only when every subject is taught from the Reformed standpoint. I doubt that anybody among us has as yet discussed this matter more cogently, and withall so sympathetically, as Professor Berkhof has done in his contribution to the *Semi-Centennial Volume*, published in connection with our festivities of last March. I confess that when I think of what my connection with our college implies I often marvel where I got the courage ever to accept a position on its faculty, and how I dared to remain so long. This, however, is certain, that the better we realize our responsibility in just this connection, the more likely it is that we shall some day really get somewhere. The fact that a Christian young man of excellent ability has gone through college and has attended a university, does not at all necessarily mean that now he is equipped to teach a certain branch of learning in this college. It may qualify him to teach in many another good college but possibly not here. Is this conceit? In no wise. It is a fact, a fact that all of us, especially the Faculty and the Board, shall do well to remember.

The second function of every college, and, therefore, of Calvin also, is to develop the student's ability to think — not, as one often hears it expressed, his thinking capacity. Our thinking capacity, I firmly believe, is a fixed quantity. College cannot increase that, but, just as a man may, for example, be a born painter yet must learn to paint by painting, so a born thinker can only learn to think by thinking. College cannot develop

a student's capacity for thinking, but it can and should develop his ability to think, and it does this not, as some seem to think, by certain special exercises, neither primarily by requiring attendance upon certain subjects, as, for example, logic, no, but while imparting knowledge it requires him to think. It not only teaches the student that Rome declined and fell, but having taught him these facts it expects him himself to reason out just why decline set in and the fall followed. It is not a matter of indifference whether a student gets any information at Calvin or not, but it is far more important that he learns where to get further information and what to do with it.

It is not only the duty of college to give a student ideas and to teach him how to work with them, it should give him ideals, and I for one, though recognizing the necessity of the former, would rather give a student one ideal than a hundred ideas. It is our ideals that govern our lives. "It is not knowledge," says Woodrow Wilson, whom I quote once again, this time from his *Mere Literature*, "it is not knowledge that moves the world but ideals."³) However, let us be sure we know what an ideal is. I often hear students and other young people speak of cherishing this or that ideal when a most casual observer speedily detects that what they speak of as an ideal is only a vague longing. When I hear a student speak of entertaining the ideal of scholarship, but discover that he reads only just what he is required

³) New York, 1896, p. 10.

to read, and studies only just so much as he is required to study, then I know scholarship is not his ideal at all. It was the apostle Paul's ideal that he might live perfectly before God. How do I know? Because he said so? Yes, but especially because he could truthfully say, "I follow after if that I may apprehend." His whole life was eloquent of the fact. When you really cherish an ideal you leave no stone unturned to realize it, obstacles do not daunt you, a thousand devils, as Luther might say, cannot block your path. You think on it by day and dream of it by night. You become fairly obsessed with it. At the end, in sooth, the ideal possesses you even more than you the ideal. That, and nothing else, is what it means to have an ideal.

This function of giving its students ideals Calvin shares with other colleges. With other christian colleges its duty is to endeavor to develop christian ideals of manhood and womanhood, and do not fail to remember that Billy Sunday, whom otherwise I do not particularly admire, was, nevertheless, everlastingly right when he said, "it takes more than a Rah-Rah-Rah and a diploma to make a man."

A very distinguished Dutch scientist while lecturing recently in this country said: "Let us bear in mind that the student's 'Lehr und Wanderjahre' should make him not only a scholar, but especially a 'man'." ⁴⁾

⁴⁾ Cohen, Ernst. *Physico-Chemical Metamorphosis*, N. Y., 1926, p. 3.

The college that fosters in its students a high level of christian manhood and womanhood has performed the primary function of every college — the development of character. Of this the emeritus president of the University of California, Benjamin Ide Wheeler, with his usual felicity of phrase says: "A university is not a place where you come as empty buckets to the well to be filled It is what goes over into spinal marrow, what goes over into real life that makes us; and what we are likely to gain from our university life is not bits of knowledge, is not maxims and rules for getting this or that; but after all it is this one thing that we talk so much about and understand so imperfectly — it is character. The men you tie to are men of character. As I grow older I come less and less to respect men of brilliancy and tie to men for their characters. And what men are going to get out of their university life is not what is pumped into the pail, but what goes over into life." ⁵⁾

Here, too, again, Calvin has a special duty to perform, namely, to instill, no, to endeavor to instill into its students Reformed ideals of thinking and living. This is all the more necessary in view of what a Cornell teacher, Professor Lane Cooper, recently said in his *Two Views of Education*,⁶⁾ namely, "the history of American Education, as we can see by a glance at the change which

⁵⁾ *The Abundant Life*, Univ. of California Press, 1926, p. 25.

⁶⁾ New York, 1922, p. 276.

occurred in the last fifty years of the nineteenth century, has meant a gradual movement away from the ideas of Calvin and the Protestant Reformation toward those of Rousseau and the French Revolution." And then on page 244 he adds what one would hardly expect from a Cornell professor and which I find most heartening: "We need more of the spirit of Calvin and less of the spirit of Rousseau in American education."

I must, however, warn you here not to expect too much of college. John Graham, Mr. Lorimer's famous Chicago pork-packer, in his *Letters From a Self-made Merchant to His Son*, says: "College does not make fools, it develops them. It does not make bright men, it develops them. A fool will turn out a fool whether he goes to college or not, though he'll turn out a different sort of a fool." Just so. Indeed, I predict that he'll turn out a bigger fool for having gone through college. No fool can make quite so egregious a fool of himself as can the educated fool.

No, college is not omnipotent. It cannot create geniuses, it cannot convert sinners, it cannot make saints of students. What it can do is endeavor to train its students in the proper way, then leaving the issue with God. Right here example on the part of the faculty and especially, too, of senior students means more than precept. May my colleagues and I myself never forget that it should be possible truthfully to say of each of us as of the Person in the prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*:

"Cristes lore and His apostles twelve
He taughte, but first he followed it himselve."

The occasion not only justifies but requires, I think, some reference to myself. During the past academic year I have performed the duties of president of this college in the capacity of acting president. In March last the Board of Trustees, upon nomination of the Faculty, offered me the presidency of the institution for a period of four years. You students who know me so well, (especially those of you who have attended my classes), who know so well my aversion to the limelight and of all mere administrative detail, and who know, too, my fondness of teaching, will believe me when I say that I desired to decline the appointment, especially, too, in view of my limitations of which I am only too painfully conscious. However, such sense of duty as good and wise parents bred in me has led me to take upon myself what is, I regret to say, in many ways an irksome task. I want you to know, lest future developments should mystify you, that unless further experience in the office changes my attitude, I shall not occupy it long. I have so informed the Board of Trustees, for, while I have been appointed for a four-year term, I have reserved to myself the right to resign at the close of any academic year for reasons sufficient to myself. It is because my administration is apt to prove a brief one, a mere interlude in the history of our College, that I have not delivered a formal inaugural address.

To my colleagues I wish to say that I have not the slightest intention of flaunting my authority. I purpose to go in and out among you as a colleague among colleagues. While for the sake of convenience I may sometimes use the expression, president and faculty, I, nevertheless, disapprove of the idea that underlies it. It is my opinion that the president does not stand outside of and above the faculty but is himself a part of the faculty. He is chief among his fellows. Without exception you have shown me during the past year a for me positively touching spirit of coöperation. I hope that now that the novelty of my administration is worn off this coöperation will not decline. When it does I shall take it as a hint that you would prefer to see another pilot at the helm.

As for you, students, after observing me in action for one year, you have requested the Board of Trustees through the Student Council that it might continue me in the presidential office. I have regarded this as a vote of confidence. May I now remind you that you may make my work difficult without trying; easy you can hardly make it without effort. Get the Calvin spirit, as I have at least intimated it this morning, and we shall get on famously.

I have always insisted that the most important thing in a college is its faculty. I know that this insistence of mine has at times been misunderstood, and I fear that it may have been attributed by some to an overweening sense of my own im-

portance. Well, that is a misapprehension that gives me little worry, for I have abundant support for my contention. A recent writer on the rise of the universities has well said, "the mediaeval university was, in the fine old phrase of Pasquier, 'built of men'—*batie en hommes*."⁷ It is literally true for there were no libraries, no laboratories, no museums, no gymnasiums, no heating plants, no endowments, only masters and students. To-day we cannot organize our institutions of higher learning quite so simply, but it is as true today as it was seven centuries ago that fundamentally considered colleges and universities are built of men. All else is secondary. I shall, therefore, continue to maintain that the faculty is the college, but note well, it exists as everything else here exists for the students.

Let us not think of Calvin in terms of grounds, and bricks, and mortar, far be it from us, for Calvin is alive, intensely alive, consisting as it does of live men and live women. Calvin means for me not this or any other building, no, it means my colleagues and you students. And you students do not begin to realize how eager I am to be your friend. Cater to you I shall not. When discipline is necessary I purpose, with support of the Faculty, to exercise it without fear and without favor. Popularity I have never sought and I am not going to begin doing so now, but I earnestly desire to be to you a true friend. Come to

⁷) Haskins, C. H., *The Rise of Universities*, N. Y., 1923, p. 5.

me when you need one. Do not let my native reserve which gives me, I am told, a somewhat forbidding exterior, keep you away. But come to me at my office. I know very well that in some colleges students run into and out of the president's house from early morning until late at night. Well, I cannot work that way, I cannot be that kind of president, and, frankly, I think a man is very foolish indeed to permit his time to be dissipated in such a manner. I am confident that when you stop to think you will agree with me and will not misunderstand my insistence upon this point.

Now the year lies before us. What it will bring us as individuals and as institution no man knows. It is a book sealed with many seals. What its contents are we cannot know till God Himself opens the book, as he is doing even now, and turns the pages for us one by one so that we may read. That the reading always will be pleasant I do not for one moment delude myself into believing, for that I have seen and tasted too much of life. But trusting in Almighty God let us face the future fearlessly, and let us work while it is yet day ere the night comes, when no man can work.

XXV

WHO SHOULD ATTEND COLLEGE?¹⁾

In my attendance on meetings of college presidents I have been impressed by the eagerness of most of them for more and still more students. The exceptions are the heads of big universities and of the older eastern colleges. I have even heard plans discussed for united advertising in order to stimulate attendance. I surmise that our American lust for bigness is playing a role.

Here at Calvin mere numbers interest us very little. We had an enrollment this past year of somewhat more than three hundred students — a comparatively small total. Of course, when September comes we shall be pleased to have as heavy an enrollment as we can properly care for, but we are far more interested in the quality than in the quantity of new students. We would prefer a Gideon's Band to a huge army of which many individuals are undesirable. I regret to say that each year again we get some freshmen who never should have come to college, students of whom we can make little or nothing for any one or more of the following reasons:

1. They lack ability.
2. They lack health.
3. They lack abiding interest.

¹⁾ This essay first appeared in *The Banner*, July 27, 1928.

4. They lack money and must spend too much time in earning it while at college.
5. They lack adaptability to our ideas and ideals.

This last, of course, has reference only to our own particular college.

There is complaint that too many young people are attending college, a complaint difficult of substantiation. Are 850,000 students out of a population such as that of the United States too many? Probably not. The trouble is not, at least not in the first place, that too many people go to college, but that too many go who should not.

As I see it, college should be attended only by those who show at least some signs of future leadership. College is not for the masses. I know that in the ears of many this is rank heresy. I know, too, that we shall be accused of making college aristocratic, but I believe that if we substitute any other conception of whom college is for we shall only be injuring ourselves. Our church which supports the college will be the loser.

And so I cannot conscientiously urge parents to send all their sons and daughters who graduate from high school to college. Rather do I urge you to keep them home unless you see in them some real promise and see that they themselves manifest at least some genuine interest. Do not drive son or daughter to college. Do not send them because even among us it is getting more and more to be the correct thing to put one's children

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through college. If you are in doubt consult your pastor and especially secure the opinion of the boy's teachers. Use your own judgment. Remember that desire alone is not enough, there must be ability; remember, too, that ability alone is not enough, there must be desire. Do not waste your money and ruin your boy by sending him where he does not belong, but, and permit me to say this with all emphasis, deny yourself if need be to send your boy to college if he does belong there.

College is a place for the training of prospective leaders. When I say this I do not mean great leaders only. No, I mean teachers, ministers, lawyers, doctors, statesmen, business men whose vision transcends the mere accumulation of money. The cry always is for leadership. There is nothing we need right now so much as leadership of the right kind. College must train leaders, our leaders. The leaders of our Christian Reformed people of the next generation are going to come from Calvin College. Unless we breed them our people shall be devoid of leadership, than which scarcely a greater calamity could befall them. But then certain things are necessary:

1. A faculty that is capable of training leaders.
2. Students with the promise of leadership.
3. Conditions that make it possible for the faculty to give the students the proper training not only but inspiration as well.

I doubt that most of us realize just how important leadership is. An excellent illustration of its value would be such a man as Abraham Kuyper and what he accomplished, an excellent illustration of the significance of education for leadership would be the same Kuyper. Imagine Kuyper without his education, could he have done for Holland and for Calvinism what he actually wrought? Have you ever stopped to note that all the great leaders of the Reformation were what we call college-bred men? Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, every last one of them was. So were many of the lesser lights, men like Melanchthon, Bugenhagen, Sturm, and many others.

College cannot make leaders of students devoid of capacity for leadership, but neither can you expect great leadership from men in whom capacity has remained undeveloped because of lack of education.

So the reader can understand how eager we are to see each September not only how many new students are enrolled but who they are. Is there the light of intelligence in their eyes? Do they manifest personality? In a word, do they show promise? People expect both too much and too little from college. On the one hand it is expected to make leaders when all it can do is develop them. On the other hand people say that a man of promise will make his mark whether he attends college or not. Doubtless he will but will it be the same kind and the same size of mark?

I trust I have made my meaning clear. We do not welcome here at Calvin any and all. We do welcome, if not effusively at least most sincerely, students who have ability, who are willing to study, and willing, too, to abide by such regulations as are deemed necessary. There is nothing within reason that we are not willing to do for them. If you have such sons or daughters send them on. We will give them of our best.

XXVI

SOME CURRENT EDUCATIONAL IDEALS¹⁾

There was born in England, some three and a half centuries ago, one of the world's remarkable men. From his very youth he was infected with what the Germans call *Strebertum*, that is, was one who aimed high without being squeamish as to the means employed for realizing these aims. Neither did he strive in vain. Indeed, few, very few have attained to so many and such high honors and dignities. First a member of Parliament, then counsel to the Queen; first dubbed a knight, then elevated to the peerage; he rose rung by rung till eventually he found himself at the very top of the political ladder when James I. placed him in the highest civil office within grant of the crown.

But there is another side to this extraordinary man. He who spent his days in political wire-pulling, in intrigue at court, in odious sycophancy and chicanery, spent his nights oftentimes in noble contemplation, and in penning those books in dignified English and sonorous Latin that have established his fame, as philosopher and as man of letters. Many of you have already anticipated me

¹⁾ In reading this lecture the reader should remember that it was delivered fifteen years ago. I feel, however, that it still has a certain value, and is deserving of being kept alive for another decade.

when I say that I have reference to Bacon, Sir Francis Bacon, Baron Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, Keeper of the Great Seal, sometime Lord Chancellor of the Realm, in Pope's caustic line, "The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind."

Now Bacon was unmistakably a Renaissance type, very naturally, too, since Elizabethan England was, despite the Reformation, still very largely under Renaissance influence. The intellectual recklessness and restlessness, the astonishing versatility, the indomitable ambition, and the almost incredible unscrupulousness that characterized the Italian Renaissance, all these, if less intense, can be found in the England of Bacon's day. Many-sided was the Renaissance. He who is cautious will think twice before asserting that this or that is its outstanding feature, but, surely, one dare say without fear of contradiction that if not its most prominent trait, one of the most prominent traits of the period everywhere was a very lust for conquering nature, a passion manifesting itself in the most varied ways. In a Leonardo da Vinci — one of the greatest geniuses that ever trod earth — it was evinced in the life-long endeavor to fly, to win dominion over the air by equipping man with wings. In the alchemists this same eager craving came to the surface in the perennial, unwearied search for the philosopher's stone, for the elixir of life, which, once discovered, would enable man not only to transmute the baser metals into gold, but to lead captive the grim Reaper himself. It was this overmastering desire

to subjugate nature, to know about her all there is to be known, that led to those endless voyages of discovery and exploration with which we have been made so familiar. Men's imaginations took fire as world upon world was opened before their gaze. Thus the poet Spenser, contemporary of Bacon, noted how day by day

“ ‘Through hardy enterprise
Many great Regions are discovered,
Which to late age were never mentioned.
Who ever heard of th’ Indian Peru?
Or who in venturous vessel measured
The Amazon huge river, now found true?
Or fruitfulest Virginia who did ever view?’ ”²⁾

And so Bacon, son of his age as he was, only voices the thought of that age when he insists, *nam ipsa scientia potestas est* — “for knowledge is power.”

Sidney Lee, therefore, may well say that the faith of the Renaissance student was that of Marlowe's *Faustus*, which he quotes to this effect:

“ ‘Oh, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honor, and omnipotence,
Is promised to the studious artisan!
All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be at my command; emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces;
But his dominion that exceeds in this,
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man.’ ”³⁾

²⁾ Quoted by Sidney Lee. *Great Englishmen of the Sixteenth Century*, N. Y., 1904, p. 205.

³⁾ *Op. cit.*, p. 4.

Well, you say, mayhap this is interesting in itself, but what has it to do with the theme of the evening? Just this: Have you had occasion to hear or to read a goodly number of the commencement orations of the last decade or more? If so, have you observed that, barring one — of which I shall speak in a little — there is no sentiment quite so dear to the orator's heart as just that of Bacon — knowledge is power? Doubtless, to start a pupil upon life's career with a rich measure of knowledge because of the power it brings has at all times been a pedagogical ideal, but, I venture to say, never more conscientiously so than today; and that because, as we are beginning more and more to discern, the Renaissance is far from dead. No one today thinks of ending the period with the beginning of the Reformation, Elizabethan England, for example, being as much under Renaissance as under Reformation influence. My fancy sometimes pictures the eighteenth century as a sort of trough between two tidal waves, the first rising to its crest in the fifteenth century for Italy, and in the sixteenth century for Europe north of the Alps, while the second may prove to have attained its crest at about the present time.

Whatever you may think of this, and however our own day may lack certain features characteristic of the Renaissance proper while owning others foreign to it, the age since Rousseau undoubtedly possesses earmarks of the earlier period. Take, for instance, the trait of which I have already

spoken, the passionate desire to subdue nature. Did Leonardo his life long dream of aerial navigation by heavier than air machines, the idea has ceased to be the butt of ridicule since the epoch-making flights of the past decade. Did the intrepid explorers of the Elizabethan age circumnavigate the globe and vastly extend man's knowledge of its surface, our own age — in distinction from the eighteenth century which did relatively little — not only located the poles, but mapped South America, vast regions of which had remained unknown; made it impossible for us to speak longer of Africa as the dark continent; and traversed, to mention no more, the most forbidding regions of Asia. If the men of the Renaissance began to settle the American continent, the eighteenth century hardly carried these settlers across the Appalachians, whereas now only the Pacific can check the advance.

It is true that nobody, nobody of any repute, is seeking today the elixir of life in any alchemical or Jekyll-Hyde sense, but it is also true that since the work of Metchnikoff, and Loeb, and Harrison, and Carrel, men are anew actively speculating on the indefinite prolongation of life. It is true, too, that men no longer seek the philosopher's stone, but it is equally true that, especially since the discovery of radium, more and more chemists are entertaining the notion that perhaps after all there is but one fundamental element of which our eighty odd so-called elements are mere modifications. Very recent investigations conducted by

the noted English chemist Sir William Ramsay and by Professor J. N. Collie seem to point to the possibility of transmuting copper into lithium and other elements, thorium into carbon, and hydrogen into helium and neon. The old alchemical notion of changing lead and silver into the king of metals can no longer be considered absurd.

Of course, nobody who has his eyes open is blind to the fact that there are numerous evidences of world-weariness, particularly in the literature of continental Europe, but the *Weltschmerz* that exists alongside many adolescent traits is nothing but an accentuation of the dualism that crops out in every age.

No, one does not overstate the case if one says that in the last century alone, because of his hankering after power, man has done more to bridle the forces of nature than all the ages that went before. Only a hundred years ago Napoleon was at the zenith of his fame, yet he knew nothing, absolutely nothing, of electric tramways, electric light, the automobile, the telegraph, the telephone, — to say nothing of wireless telegraphy and telephony. He knew nothing of aerial navigation, of steamships or steamcars, of typewriter or sewing machine, of kerosene oil or illuminating gas, of camera or cinematograph, of submarine or superdreadnaught, of radium or Roentgen rays, of bacteriology or aseptic and antiseptic surgery. If you know anything at all of the marvelous progress in the field of the natural and applied sciences, you are moved to cry out with the psalmist:

"O Lord, our Lord, what is man that thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."

Indeed, the story is one that might be taken bodily from some *Arabian Nights*. Man is doing many things today that would have seemed little short of miraculous less than a century ago. He bores holes through mountains, tunnels under rivers, and actually builds a railroad over part of the ocean itself. He digs deep and far into the bowels of the earth, brings to the surface what is known as coal, uses it to vaporize water, and by means of this vapor warms his dwelling and transports himself and his possessions by land and by sea, to the uttermost parts of the earth. He builds leviathans, capable of transporting small cities bag and baggage at a single voyage, propelled by twin-screws which make "the deep to boil like a pot." He builds himself a house forty and more stories high and begins to lay its walls of brick at any level, the tenth or the thirtieth, it matters not to him. He tills the soil with implements almost human in their function and super-human in their precision and dexterity. He makes presses that print, fold, paste, and cut the many-paged metropolitan newspaper at the rate of some seventy thousand copies the hour; rifles deadly two miles and more away; cannons "delivering from ten to fifteen aimed rounds of shrapnel a minute upon a target so distant as to be practically invisible to the naked eye, with accuracy so

great in trained hands that exposure is suicide.”⁴⁾

But this is by no means all. Man has invented a little contrivance which he calls a camera obscura, by means of which he takes wonderful pictures of objects and events, even more, he can now take pictures and throw them on a screen so hundreds may see them, that represent not a given moment of some process or occurrence, but portrays it from beginning to end with life-like vividness. He makes little sticks by the million which one need but strike against almost any surface and, behold, they burn. He prints books the blind can read, and tells you the chemical composition of the solar atmosphere. Without so much as raising his voice he passes the time of day with some friend a thousand or more miles distant. He flashes messages through the air with incredible velocity. He bridges the Niagara with structures of a single span, harnesses its Falls as if they were a pair of gigantic horses, forces them to haul streetcars in Buffalo, to turn the machinery of a hundred factories, and to illuminate a thousand homes. By an engineering feat before which a master like Leonardo — who himself sought to turn the Arno from Pisa and failed — would stand in mute amazement, he cuts the two Americas in twain. If not in a literal, none the less, in a very real sense he chains the lightning, reduces it to serfdom, forces it to take him from place to place, to light his residence and workshop,

⁴⁾ Wilcox, C. De W., “Changes in Military Science” in *The Nineteenth Century*, N. Y., p. 483.

and to turn his machinery. Verily, it would seem that man in his intrepidity is to stop at nothing, for he cuts into the living flesh, takes apart the human body as if it were a mere automaton, elides an appendix, or a few feet of intestines, or some important organ, operates on heart, lungs, or brain, and a fortnight or two later meets his patient on the street. Most wonderful of all, if there was one person present at the operation who suffered pain it was not the patient himself, owing to the merciful administration of one of several anaesthetics.

But even this is not all. In an eloquent passage Woodrow Wilson's successor at Princeton asserts that there is, "a whole universe of supersensible phenomena, a world of the all-pervading ether, a world of magnetic fields and electric waves, a world of ultra-violet rays, of radio-active forces, of ions and electrons, of ideoplasm and entelechies, a world which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, but which the mind of man has penetrated, and brought under its control." ⁵⁾

With the curiosity after the hidden and the passion for the unattainable incarnated in so typical a Renaissance character as Domenico Neroni, man's purpose today, if ever, is

"To follow knowledge like a sinking star
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought."⁶⁾

Surely, were Bacon to return to us now he

⁵⁾ Hibben, John G., *A Defense of Prejudice and Other Essays*, N. Y., 1911, p. 28.

⁶⁾ From Tennyson's *Ulysses*.

would exclaim: "Have I not said long ago that knowledge is power?" The telephone, the submarine, yes, even the aeroplane would arouse no great amazement for had he not dreamt of these in his *New Atlantis*; but a hundred and one other things that pass under our eyes unheeded having become commonplace, would elicit from him, who would know so well how to value them, constantly repeated exclamations of astonishment and awe, for the world of the here and now abounds in things never dreamt of in "Solomon's House."

Shall we marvel then, that in the sight of all this some delicately adjusted mind like Nietzsche's should become unbalanced, and should dream dreams, and see visions, and sing songs of the *Uebermensch*? Shall we marvel that a Haushofer should see these supermen, our descendants, such masters of the vehicle which transports them through space that they can actually deflect it from its orbit and travel at will through the boundless ether?⁷⁾ Shall we marvel that our commencement orators should preach fervently and with much unction from the Baconian text — knowledge is power? Have we not all become more or less intoxicated by the mere contemplation of the power that the twentieth century is to bring us because of its accessions to knowledge?

Education for Efficiency is the title of a book by the ex-president of Harvard University. The

⁷⁾ Haushofer, Max., *An Des Daseins Grenzen*, 3d ed., Munich, 1910, p. 263.

question today is not, who are you? It is, what can you do? Hence the emphasis on manual training, vocational training, and vocational guidance. Hence the over-emphasis on the natural sciences at the expense of those that deal with less tangible things. Hence, too, the evidences of appalling unscrupulousness, unscrupulousness before which even the Renaissance with its Borgias need hardly blush. Did these bribe right and left, corruption and graft are rife among us. Did the Borgias, father and son, ply treacherous dagger and poisoned cup, the McNamaras, John and James, with the connivance if not at the behest of men occupying positions of honor and trust, coldly and calculatingly, without a sign of compunction hurl a score of innocents into instant death. And why? Because, as in the case of the Borgias, their victims had somehow incurred their animosity? Not at all. We all know the story of how these unfortunates happened to be in the building which the conspirators chose to destroy, to destroy, mark you, because employer and employee were engaged in a life and death struggle for — supremacy.

That burning lust for power that urged Bacon from goal to goal till finally he overreached himself, that same lust is potent today spurring men on and on, now using legitimate anon illegitimate methods, but goading him restlessly on and on. Self-sufficient man would be. Once again, as in the beginning, he is hearkening to the honeyed promise: "Ye shall be as gods." Feuerbach ventures even further. In his *Das Wesen des Chris-*

tentums we are taught not that God created man but that man creates God.⁸⁾ But if God is dead, as Nietzsche would have it; or if He is man's creature, as Feuerbach has it, then, forsooth, poor Henley, be it in impotent self-assertion, may well ease his surcharged heart by giving vent to the heaven-defying couplet:

"I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul."⁹⁾

Education for power that, truly, is a current ideal, and it is so, as I have tried to show, because the spirit of the Renaissance is active in us still. But now comes the crucial question. What shall we do with the power knowledge brings? It is exceedingly interesting to note that when it comes to replying to this question we break with the Renaissance, for while the latter was in general intensely individualistic our own day is social, if not socialistic. Despite the undercurrent of individualism that ever again rises to the surface in men like Stirner, Byron, Nietzsche, Ibsen, and others more, the answer of our day to the question raised is not a doubtful one. It is recorded in books and periodicals and I even found it one day emblazoned over the very doors of a Boston school. I happened to pass through a street of the Back Bay district when my glance was caught by the beautiful lines of the building. Almost at once my eye was arrested by a motto over one of the

⁸⁾ Stuttgart, 1903, pp. 14 ff, 223.

⁹⁾ In his *Out of the Night that Covers Me*.

twin entrances. It read: Education for Service. Straightway my eye sought the other entrance expecting to find inscribed there, Education for Power, but that, too, read: Education for Service. That graphically presented a second current ideal, one complementing that of which we have already spoken. Service is the ideal. Serve whom? One's fellowman. It is true Bacon already taught the very same thing, but in so far he was in advance of his age. Never before have men been so possessed by this ideal of service. It is held high not only in school and college, though especially there, but in the press, in the pulpit, and on the lecture platform. When a Carnegie declares that it is a crime to die rich — though despite his munificence he is in imminent danger of perpetrating this offense — he is cheered to the echo. When a Pearson dies, if not in actual poverty at least in moderate circumstances after devoting his wealth to philanthropic purposes, he is held up to others as one after whom they should pattern. Only, for reasons that need not concern us here, a Rockefeller's gifts meet with but little appreciation.

If now we inquire into the nature of these benefactions we discover a most interesting fact, namely, that just those men who have acquired prodigious power because of their wealth, just these seek now to serve their fellows, and seek to do so chiefly by fostering institutions for the preservation and extension of knowledge. Thus Mr. Rockefeller has given fabulous sums for

founding and maintaining the University of Chicago and the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, both of which have already won fame at home and abroad. Mr. Carnegie, too, has invested fortunes not only in library buildings, but in establishing the Carnegie Foundation for pensioning college and university teachers; the Carnegie Institute for aiding and encouraging investigation, research, and discovery; and the Carnegie Technical Schools of Pittsburgh. As for Mr. Pearson, everybody knows that he turned over practically his entire fortune to further the cause of education. Even Cecil Rhodes who dreamed of empires invested part of his fortune in establishing at Oxford the scholarships that go by his name.

But there are other forms of power than wealth and other forms of service than those we have been considering. Probably the two most loved women in America today are Mrs. Finley J. Shepard, formerly Miss Helen Gould, and Miss Jane Addams. It is quite evident, too, whose service is most highly esteemed. Not without reason has Miss Addams been called the foremost woman of America, for if Miss Gould gave of her wealth Miss Addams gave herself; where the one stood ready to spend, the other stood ready to be spent. Little wonder that your Vassar, Smith, Wellesley girl graduate is so eager to enter settlement work, when in her most impressionable age the ideal of service is incorporated for her in so noble a personality as Jane Addams unquestionably is.

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We stand in the sign of social service. Whatever their practice may be the ideal held high before our embryo physicians, teachers, ministers, lawyers, is this ideal of a life of service rather than of a life spent in amassing mere filthy lucre. Verily, even the devotee of pure science, the man who consecrates his life to the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, recking not at all whether or not what he discovers is of any practical application, even he is urged on by the reminder that knowledge is power and that, by that token, he cannot fail to serve mankind if he add but a mite to the world's store of learning. Only when we remember this can we understand the emphatic language used by Sir Ernest Shackleton in commenting on the tragic death of Captain Scott and his four companions in the Antarctic. According to an Associated Press report of February 18, Sir Ernest declared: "Human lives are nothing if by going forth we can add one iota to the sum of human knowledge."

Why the ideal of our age should be social where that of an earlier age was individualistic is a long story. I am not sure that I could tell it if I would. In any event we would be led too far. Whatever the historical reason may be of one thing we need entertain no doubt; there is a most intimate relation between the aim under consideration and the current emasculation of theology. Men will hear no more of doctrine. It is taboo. Dry-as-dust theologians may be allowed to wrangle to their heart's content among the desiccated

bones of mediaeval dogma, but as for others why should they weary themselves by pondering exploded notions, when after all it matters not what we believe, if we but give everybody a square deal and stand ready to do our neighbor a good turn. It is the old story. Not salvation by grace but by works. This being the prevailing conception education for service must needs become the common aim.

These are some educational ideals cherished today. Before I proceed to consider them somewhat critically I wish to speak more especially of a third ideal not of but for education. The distinction I would imply is simply this: an ideal of education is one that inheres in education itself, or is thought to inhere in it; an ideal for education is one that is cherished by educationalists for their science. Just as, by way of illustration, a father may entertain for his son the ideal that he shall become a minister or a lawyer, while at the very same time the ideal of his son may be to become a carpenter. The ideal for education of which I would speak is that of making it an exact science. Logically I probably should first prove that pedagogy is a science at all, but since this is now more or less grudgingly conceded by most, and since this lecture has its definite limitations, we shall simply accept without argument that pedagogy is not only an art but a science as well. With this, however, some educationalists are not content. Within the science group there is a more exclusive circle known as the exact sciences.

Into this inner circle pedagogy is endeavoring to elbow its way. The question is, does it belong there?

In considering this problem we pass into an atmosphere wholly different from that which we have been breathing. Yet the third and last ideal of which I wish to speak this evening is, certainly, not out of all relation to what has gone before. For what fault did Bacon find with mediaeval science? That it was deductive, non-experimental. Bacon believed that a new method, the inductive-experimental method was needed. Bacon, who always preached better than he practised, himself accomplished little, but Leonardo — as great a scientist as artist — Leonardo before Bacon, breaking with mediaevalism became, in the words of Wernle, "the father of the experimental method,"¹⁰⁾ and, therefore, as Brandi expresses it, "the first and great natural scientist."¹¹⁾

Now it is precisely this complaint of method that is raised by the advocates of an exact pedagogy. Their coryphaeus Meumann, in the first of his *Vorlesungen*, finds this fault with the old pedagogy, that it has been deductive, non-experimental and, therefore, unscientific.¹²⁾ All this must be changed. Before long we are to have from Meumann's own hand a work on systematic pedagogy

¹⁰⁾ Wernle, Paul. *Renaissance und Reformation*, Tübingen, 1912, p. 30.

¹¹⁾ Brandi, Karl. *Die Renaissance in Florenz und Rom*, 3d ed., Leipsic, 1909, p. 103.

¹²⁾ Meumann, Ernst. *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die experimentelle Pädagogik*, Leipsic, 1907, vol. I, p. 7 ff.

whose principles are derived exclusively, not from metaphysics or theology, but from observation and experiment. Given such a pedagogy the whole educational process will assume a totally different aspect. The teacher will come to his work with principles based not upon metaphysical speculations or theological prepossessions, but based rather upon carefully observed facts. All this means vastly increased efficiency for the teacher and correspondingly increased capacity for service. Evidently the present ideal is not out of all relation to those already discussed.

Can we make of pedagogy an exact science? The question expresses the purpose. The answer depends upon whether or not the new psychology may be called an exact science since those who are seeking to make pedagogy so endeavor to do this upon an experimental basis, their methods being derived in the main from experimental psychology. Whether, therefore, the current ideal of an exact science of education has been or ever will be realized depends upon whether or not experimental psychology can be, or already has been developed into such a science. Now, nobody questions the status of physics or chemistry in the family of sciences, but that of psychology is questioned. Since the claims of an exact pedagogy stand or fall with this new psychology it is obvious that in order to test the former we need only to inquire into the latter.

First, then, what makes a science exact? Is it not the possibility of predicting precisely what

effect will be obtained from given causes under given conditions? Because of this possibility of exact prediction the astronomer can tell you today to the last minute and second, each and every eclipse that will occur, say, in the year of grace 1929. Because of the same reason Mendeléeff, shortly after the discovery of the periodic law, was able to predict the existence of scandium, germanium, and gallium, elements at the time wholly unknown, and, what is more, announced in advance their physical and chemical properties. With these predictions, since verified, we may say that Mendeléeff's science ceased to be alchemy and became chemistry — an exact science.

Such a science psychology neither is nor ever will become. Why? Why is the creator of Mr. Dooley entirely justified in saying that "a civil engineer can calculate with fair accuracy the amount of water pressure which a certain dam can safely stand, [whilst] a moral engineer can never predict how much pressure of temptation a given individual will stand"?¹³⁾

Heracleitus long ago answered the question when he exclaimed: "The boundaries of the soul you cannot find, though you pace off all its streets, so deep a foundation has it." And Augustine in a telling passage, despite a mixed metaphor, cries out in the fourth book of his *Confessions*:

"Man himself is a great abyss, 'whose hairs Thou numberest,' O Lord, and they are not lost in Thy sight; and yet his hairs are more easily

¹³⁾ *American Magazine*, March, 1913, p. 133.

numbered than his affections, and the movements of his heart."

There lies the crux of the whole matter. We can number this and we can number that, we can number the chemical elements now known, we can number after a fashion the very stars of heaven, but number a man's "affections," that we cannot. And how are we to predict with any degree of certainty "the movements of his heart"? Is he not merry today, and sad tomorrow; weak as a reed today, unbending as an oak tomorrow; easily aroused to passion today, cold as an icicle tomorrow? The heavenly bodies do not alter their courses, do not creep today and fly tomorrow, do not follow an elliptical orbit today and a circular one tomorrow; but man — excepting in the simplest cases, who shall predict, predict with certainty how he will react toward certain stimuli today even when knowing how he behaved under like stimulation before? May not his entire mood be different? Stars have no moods but man is a hopeless tangle of daily, hourly, momentarily varying emotional states.

You see the colossal difficulty that confronts the psychologist. "No other science," says the Italian scholar Billia, "changes its object: the mathematician makes no change in the nature and relation of numbers; physicists and chemists do not create the phenomena which they report

"In psychology quite the contrary is true. The observation that is made of the facts of the soul does not leave the facts as they were before. If

I perceive that I am ignorant, I am no longer as ignorant as I was He who perceives that he is in love is no longer in love in the same manner or in the same degree that he was. Perhaps he becomes more so, perhaps less, but never the same. He who nurses his passion each day and each hour and examines it with a critical eye, either causes it to grow to the loftiest heights or else effaces it by his analysis." ¹⁴⁾

At the same time it does not follow that because we cannot make of psychology an exact science as physics is exact that it has no claim to consideration as a genuine science. Those who take that position are, it seems to me, as far beside the truth as their opponents. Because we cannot measure processes directly, because we can only measure them by measuring stimuli and the physiological phenomena that accompany physical processes, it does not follow that tolerably accurate measurements may not be obtained. Has it ever occurred to you that when you bring a thermometer into your room and find that it indicates a temperature of so many degrees Fahrenheit, you have by no means measured the degree of warmth directly? We never measure heat directly. The mercury in the tube expands or contracts as the heat increases or decreases and all we do is measure the temperature indirectly, expressing it in terms of mercurial contraction or

¹⁴⁾ In an address delivered before the Third International Congress of Philosophy, Heidelberg, 1908. Published in *The Monist*, July, 1909, p. 362.

expansion. So with electricity. How would you measure electricity directly? Yet who thinks of questioning the scientific value of research into the nature of heat or electricity? If in psychology all measurements are obtained indirectly, in the physical sciences many, if not most, are secured in the same way. Yet nobody doubts the scientific value of results obtained in any but the psychical sciences by such means. How can we account for this apparent discrimination against an important field of research? The secret lies here: A given expansion of mercury — to adhere to our illustration — under standard conditions always indicates a definite rise in temperature. It is impossible that under standard conditions one should get one result today and another tomorrow. But a given deflection of the needle as it records on the revolving cylinder respiratory variations does not, not even for one and the same subject, indicate a definite emotional disturbance. An emotion that causes very decided respiratory disturbances today because the person is subnormal, nervous, excited, or depressed, may cause but very slight disturbance tomorrow if the subject has recovered wonted health or composure. Here, you see, we have found psychology's vulnerable spot. It was upon this tendon of Achilles that Moebius laid his finger when he wrote his, *Hoffnungslosigkeit aller Psychologie*.¹⁵⁾ It is to be regretted that Moebius gave so sensational a title to a brochure that otherwise is the reverse of sensational. Moebius nowhere

¹⁵⁾ Halle, a. S., 1907.

questions the value, the supreme value of psychology. He merely combats with his wonted vigor the self-sufficiency of psychology, insisting on the hopelessness of ever getting beyond studies of detail, the hopelessness of ever getting face to face with vital things so long as psychology seeks to cut loose from all metaphysics. Psychology's claims to consideration as an exact science are questioned not so much because its measurements are indirect, but because its conditions are never more than relatively constant. Quantitative results may be obtained and these of the greatest value, but they are never more than approximate. So long as psychology continues to set up shop as an exact science, so long she only stultifies herself; so soon as psychology ceases to claim what is not rightfully hers so soon may we hope to see her come into her own. The case for psychology is anything but hopeless, for if not an exact science, a science, a corpus of organized knowledge it certainly is.

Now, obviously, if the pedagogy which wants to be considered exact is built up very largely on experimental psychology; if, further, we deny that this latter is an exact science and contend that it can never become such; then the pretensions of a so-called exact science of education rest upon a delusion. That does not mean that the application of psychological methods in pedagogical investigations is to be deprecated. Not at all, but we shall simply refuse to pursue what proves to be a will-o'-the-wisp, a false ideal.

But, some one objects, that is pessimism. I think not. It is optimism. The realization of one's limitations is not pessimism, but is the first step towards a sound and vigorous optimism.

What shall we say in conclusion of the ideals of education with which we began, namely, education for power and for service? With certain qualifications I am prepared to make them my own. Would anybody here venture to gainsay the nobility of such ideals? Do we not read of the Saviour himself that his word was "with power:" that the people seeing his works "were all amazed at the mighty power of God," and that "they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes"? Indeed, Professor Peabody in his Lyman Beecher lectures at Yale has shown clearly how often this one word "power" is applied in the New Testament to the influence of Jesus.¹⁶⁾

And as for the ideal of service, do we not read that the Master journeyed from northern Galilee to southern Judea to heal the sick, to restore the lame and the palsied, and to quicken the dead? Do we not read that he came to seek and to save sinners, and did he not say of himself: "I am among you as he that serveth"? Aye, verily, was not his life one ceaseless round of disinterested service? And we all know how emphatic the apostle James is about the absolute necessity of

¹⁶⁾ Peabody, Francis G., *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character*, N. Y., 1905, pp. 52, 53.

works. Thus he says in the seventeenth verse of the second chapter of his epistle: "Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone."

It is because, though possessing independent means, Theodore Roosevelt has not lived the life of the idle rich, but has thrown himself body and soul into the struggle for the rights of the masses; it is because, even if not wholly disinterestedly, he has spent himself freely that he might serve others, it is because of this that his Carnegie Hall speech of March 20, 1912, rings so true. Permit me to quote this one passage which deserves to live as a specimen of English pure and undefiled:

"The leader for the time being," says Mr. Roosevelt, "whoever he may be, is but an instrument to be used until broken and then to be cast aside; and if he is worth his salt he will care no more when he is broken than a soldier cares when he is sent where his life is forfeit in order that the victory may be won. In the long fight for righteousness the watchword for all of us is: spend and be spent. It is of little matter whether any one man fails or succeeds; but the cause shall not fail, for it is the cause of mankind. We, here in America, hold in our hands the hope of the world, the fate of the coming years; and shame and disgrace will be ours if in our eyes the light of high resolve is dimmed, if we trail in the dust the golden hopes of men."

This one paragraph alone would serve to reveal why Mr. Roosevelt, despite obvious faults, has

gained so phenomenal a hold upon hundreds of thousands of his countrymen.

Beyond all cavil to educate for power and for service these are worthy ideals. I can conceive of no educational institution, certainly no modern educational institution, that would deny such aims. Assuredly, it is our aim here, in College and in Seminary, to breed men possessing both a consuming desire for service and the knowledge essential to intelligent and consecrated ministry. And yet, with all sympathy for much of the feeling that lies behind these ideals, is it not time, as Professor Babbitt of Harvard asserts, is it not high time that we should hear, if not less of education for power and for service, at least more of education for wisdom and for character?¹⁷⁾ Surely knowledge is a tremendous motive force, but let us not fail to remember that it can be turned to evil purpose as well as to good. The very same physician who prepares a healing draught for you when you are ill, that same physician can prepare for you an infernal concoction that will eat out the very entrails; the very same advocate who, erudite in the law and skillful in pleading uses his knowledge today to expedite justice, that same advocate may use it tomorrow to circumvent it. It is as President Hibben in his masterly essay on Nietzsche's gospel of might asserts: "Power

¹⁷⁾ Babbitt, Irving. *Literature and the American College*, Boston, 1908, p. 70.

may be bought at too dear a price, particularly if we rob ourselves to pay for it. The power which man acquires merely externally, and which he may use as an instrument or a weapon, may leave the man himself all the weaker for its possession. Of what avail is it if one is strong merely in what he has, but weak in what he is? The crucial tests of life measure the man himself — and not that which merely pertains to him. Power shines in its glory only when it is tempered by wisdom and reverence.”¹⁸⁾

Let us beware of this worship of power, be it knowledge, be it wealth, be it mere brawn, be it whatsoever it may be, that is anthropocentric, that focuses in man, for the danger of power unscrupulously used is not averted by the effort to inculcate the desire to serve. Knowledge is relatively easily imparted. It involves the intellect only. But implanting the ideal of service involves the heart, the heart of which Jesus himself said that out of it issues all manner of evil. Harsh though it may sound, must we not ask how he who is by nature prone to all evil is to render disinterested service? Ah, somebody interjects, but that is antiquated doctrine, only obscurantists believe that today. Yes? Is Stanley Hall, for example, an obscurantist? Is he not one of our foremost psychologists, a scholar of international as well as of national reputation? Yet, listen to his words. I know I

¹⁸⁾ *Op. cit.*, p. 92.

have quoted them before, my life being spared I shall quote them yet again for the sentence, coming as it does from a former teacher of mine, continues to ring in my ears: "Who that is honest and has true self-knowledge, will not confess to recognizing in his own soul the germs and possibilities of about every crime, vice, insanity, superstition, and folly in conduct he ever heard of?"¹⁹⁾ So says President Hall, and if you question the truth of his words you are either willfully blind or you have never learned to introspect, never learned to look into the innermost recesses of your heart.

By all this I do not mean to disparage what often is unquestionably a lofty goal. Only, the fact remains that although the unregenerate may, owing to God's common grace, merit the gratitude of mankind because of noble service nobly performed, after all the ideal does not become what it should be until it becomes theocentric. Not first, much less exclusively, should we make our aim the service of our fellow. That is humanism. Nay, but we should heed the Saviour's injunction: first to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and then to love our neighbor as ourselves.

William Morton Payne in his *Little Leaders*, in language both rhythmical and beautiful gives

¹⁹⁾ Hall, G. Stanley. *Adolescence*, N. Y., 1908, vol. II, p. 86.

expression to the world's eternal quest of the educational ideal thus:

"We build and build; each generation's rise
Brings us the old new question: what the way
To shape the soul, and fit it for the fray
That is the life of man. Shall these suffice—
The rule of thumb, the formula concise,
The pedant's wisdom hoarded day by day?
Dry husks of fact — do these the toil repay?
Shall this of all our labor be the price?"²⁰⁾

What shall you answer? Is there no answer? Shall the things Payne enumerates, shall these "of all our labor be the price?" God forbid. What the true aim of education should be I endeavor to expound to my classes in education. On this occasion I can do no more than barely suggest it, for our time is spent. Furthermore, it is, as we would interpret it, hardly a current ideal, and therefore does not properly fall within the scope of my theme. It is the less necessary for me to discuss it at this time since the task has been already performed for the public by Professor Bavinck in his *Paedagogische Beginnselen*,²¹⁾ and by Prof. Berkhof in his *Christendom en Leven*.²²⁾ Let it be sufficient for this evening if I merely remind you in closing of the winged words of the

²⁰⁾ *Chicago*, 1902, p. 100.

²¹⁾ *Kampen*, 1904, pp. 24-53.

²²⁾ *Grand Rapids*, 1912, p. 7-24.

apostle Paul, which, explicitly or implicitly, include every educational ideal worth while:

“That the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” ²³⁾

Note: In the above lecture I expound some ideals of and for education current in 1913 and still held today. In the essay on *The Aim of Education* that immediately follows I advance the Scriptural ideal of education.

²³⁾ II Timothy 3: 17.

XXVII

THE AIM OF EDUCATION

“What education is, and how the young should be educated are questions that require discussion. At present there is difference of opinion as to the subjects that should be taught; for men are by no means in accord as to what the young should learn, whether they aim at virtue or at getting the best out of life And the question is brought no nearer solution by reference to the actual practice of contemporary education: no one knows whether the young should exercise themselves in those studies which are useful in life, or in those that tend towards virtue, or in those of essentially theoretical interest. All these opinions have found supporters. Furthermore, there is no agreement as to the means of cultivating virtue; for different people, starting from different conceptions of the virtue which all respect naturally differ as to how the practise of it should be cultivated.”

Could anything be more modern? If the gentle reader has overlooked the quotation marks, he doubtless never suspected that they were written by any other than a twentieth century man, like myself. There is nothing anachronistic in the whole paragraph. Yet these words were written more than two thousand years ago. You can find them in Aristotle's *Politics* V. (VIII) 2.

Now, why is it that these remarks, after

twenty centuries, are still representative of current opinion? Because now, as then, there is no general agreement as to what is meant by education, and that because there is no agreement as to its aim. We seem after all these years still to be groping for the meaning of education. How else account for books published within recent years under such titles as, *The Meaning of Education*,¹⁾ *The Mystery of Education*,²⁾ *What is It to be Educated?*³⁾ *What do we Mean by Education?*⁴⁾ and, *What is Education?*⁵⁾

Suppose, now, that you read all these books, what will you discover? That Henderson's answer is not Welton's, and Welton's is not Moore's. There is no agreement. And yet if there is one thing with regard to which we should come to some positive conclusion it is this matter of the aim of education. Raymont expresses an elementary truth when he asserts:

"The smallest details of the educator's work are inevitably colored by his general conception of its aim, and it is not too much to say that most of the defects of educational practice are due to the absence of any clearly conceived aim, or to the presence of a wrong one."⁶⁾

This can not be overemphasized. It is passing

1) Butler, N. M., N. Y., 1915; and Snowden, J. H., N. Y., 1921.

2) Wendell, B., N. Y., 1909.

3) Henderson, C. H., Boston, 1914.

4) Welton, J., London, 1918.

5) Moore, E. C., N. Y., 1915.

6) Raymont, T., *Principles of Education*, London, 1913, p. 1.

strange it is so often forgotten, more than strange, for, as Bavinck asserts:

“Bij de opvoeding komt alles in de eerste plaats aan op het doel, dat men zich met haar voor oogen stelt. De bestemming beslist over den weg die ingeslagen moet worden.” ⁷⁾

Surely, there is nothing oracular about this. One should not need a Bavinck to tell him that the journey's end determines the path one follows, and yet, when it comes to education we are often traveling we know not whither. Let me illustrate. Some years ago I read in one of the daily papers of a certain city this item:

“The School Board and Principals admit that although manual training has now been taught in . . . schools for years, there has never yet been a definite aim. How aimless the work has been appears from the fact that of the apparatus bought ‘much’ has never been set up and never will be set up but is to be disposed of as unusable.”

This in a city that prides itself upon the efficiency of its schools.

But how is it with us? Have we a definite, clearly conceived aim? Have we teachers? Have we not, many of us, a dozen or more of aims in the absence of a well-defined final aim? Are not, many of us, teaching as best we know how arithmetic, reading, writing, grammar, and so forth, with little or no vision as to what all this should ultimately be subservient to? I admit that many of my own pupils seem to have only the haziest

⁷⁾ *Op. cit.*, p. 24.

notion as to what it is all about. Why this should be true I prefer not to discuss here. It is quite possible, of course, that the fault lies with me, that I myself have not thought the matter through, or that I do not present the subject concretely enough for the ordinary student to grasp. If the fault is mine it may become apparent in what is to follow.

Before we endeavor to discover what really is the aim of education let us note that the term education is used in a broader and in a narrower sense. The broader meaning is clearly stated by Bavinck in the following words:

“In den ruimsten zin genomen, geschiedt de opvoeding in en door de gemeenschap. Onafgebroken is de eene helft der menschheid bezig aan de opvoeding van de andere helft. Het voorgaande geslacht arbeidt voortdurend, om het volgend geslacht door lichamelijke en geestelijke verzorging tot zijn eigen hoogte op te heffen en in zijne schatten te doen deelen. Met ieder menschenkind, met elk menschengeslacht, treedt eene volheid van vermogens en krachten in het aanzijn, welke aan de volwassen helft der menschheid den plicht oplegt, om ze te kweeken en tot ontwikkeling te brengen. Zooals de plant, om te groeien, een bodem behoeft, zoo komt de mensch physisch en psychisch alleen tot wasdom in het milieu van natuur en maatschappij, waarin hij gewonnen en geboren werd. De mensch wordt alleen opgevoed door den mensch.” ⁸⁾

⁸⁾ *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

Again, in another book, Bavinck expounds the same thought when he says:

“Omdat ieder mensch klein en zwak en hulpbehoevend geboren wordt en toch tot zulk eene hooge plaats in de rij der schepselen is geroepen, is opvoeding voor hem in zijne natuur gegrond, noodzakelijk en tegelijk ook mogelijk. Daarom komt opvoeding bij alle menschen, in alle tijden en in alle landen voor. Ze is volstrekt niet alleen aan de Christelijke volken eigen, maar wordt aangetroffen onder alle natiën, zelfs onder de ruwste en onbeschaafde volksstammen, en is eene voortdurende werkzaamheid van heel de menschheid. Altijd en overal is de eene, oudere helft van het menschelijk geslacht bezig, om de andere, jongere helft op te voeden, te doen deelen in de schatten van het verleden en ze straks te doen intreden in hare plaats. De opvoeding is dus geen product van het Christendom, maar bestond reeds lang te voren; zij is niet in de herschepping maar in de schepping gegrond; en zij bracht het bij sommige volken tot zulk eene hoogte, dat wij nog heden ten dage van hunne wijze lessen en van hunne praktische ervaringen partij kunnen trekken.”⁹⁾

Coming nearer home we find John Dewey setting forth the wider meaning of the term education in these words:

“Speaking generally, education signifies the sum total of processes by means of which a community or social group, whether small or large,

⁹⁾ Introduction to *Christendom en Opvoeding*, Baarn, no date, p. 8.

transmits its acquired power and aims with a view to securing its own continuous existence and growth." ¹⁰⁾

Then he goes on to say:

"The necessity of education rests upon a few simple basic facts. These are the differences of level between the mature and immature members of society and the facts of birth and death. Since all the mature members of society are certain to die, it is obvious that the conservation of a society depends upon rearing the newborn members in such a way that they will appropriate its functions and sustain its values." ¹¹⁾

From all this it should be sufficiently clear what we mean by education in the wider sense. If now we use the term in a restricted sense I think it is fair to say that education is the work of the school, meaning by school our whole educational system beginning with the kindergarten and ending with the university. The other institutions of society educate incidentally in the natural performance of their functions, but the school does so with set purpose. It is true that, as Herbart says, there are many "verborgene Miterzieher." Our whole environment influences us and the extent and depth of this influence is not quickly overestimated, but the school and only the school has for its sole task the duty of equipping the rising generation to take the place, all

¹⁰⁾ In his article on "Education" in *Monroe's Cyclopaedia of Education*, N. Y., 1911.

¹¹⁾ *Idem.*

too soon, of the generation that now is on the scene in active life.

So far so good. Education is the process by means of which one generation, especially through the agency of the school endeavors to bequeath to the coming generation all its possessions, material and spiritual, and the power to use them aright. In so doing it will be guided by its ideals. These ideals in turn are determined by its world and life view. This being the case we see why, though we have been debating the aim of education ever since Aristotle, we have as yet come to no agreement whatever. Till we are agreed on the meaning and end of life it is hopeless to expect harmony in educational aims. There will be just so many aims as there are schools of thought. It can not be otherwise. The work of each school, indeed, of each individual educator will rest upon the principles for which it or he stands.

Historically we find therefore the greatest diversity of aims. One of the most popular with the masses, however little favor it may find with educational theorists, is the livelihood, the bread-and-butter aim, which holds that the purpose of education is primarily to prepare the educand to earn a living. Probably the majority of parents who give the matter thought at all act upon this motive in sending their children to school. Almost without exception writers on education lament the prevalence of this aim. I will be the last to defend it, yet in all fairness it should be said that the ideal is by no means always so sordid

as one might think. Shortsighted, mistaken it is, but the underlying motive often is wholly commendable. Father and mother have worn themselves out in the effort to win a bare subsistence. If the hardest sort of hard work has been their lot, very well, they stand ready, if that be possible, to deny themselves even more than they have done hitherto, stand ready for almost any sacrifice that may enable them to lift their children to some higher plane where there is none of the drudgery that has bent their backs, and where are to be had all those desirable things they themselves had to forego. Materialistic the aim is but who dare say it is sordid? And yet what a pity that parents should work themselves to death in order that John may heap up wealth and Mary be vexed with social obligations, both ashamed by-and-by of the parents who begot them and toiled and slaved for them.

But even if we limit ourselves to ideal aims there is much diversity. It would be impossible in the space at my disposal to quote at length the various formulations of the ideal, even were I to limit myself to those that have enjoyed the most favor. A bare summary must suffice. An excellent summary can be found in Adams', *The Evolution of Educational Theory*:

"Preparation for complete living; the harmonious development of all the faculties; adaptation to environment; a sound mind in a sound body; the perfection of our nature; the preparation of a perfect citizen; to develop children as imperfect

beings into perfect beings; inward development; a gradual adjustment to the spiritual possessions of the race; to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright; a completely moral man; to develop self-activity; the transmission of life from the living through the living to the living; socialization—an interminable list."¹²⁾

One of the most interesting of these formulations is that of John Milton. I do not have reference to his much quoted, "I call a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war," but rather do I have reference to this passage in his *Tractate on Education*:

"The end of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regarding to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to be like him, to imitate him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection."¹³⁾

I desire, however, to call especial attention to two statements of the aim of education that will reward more careful consideration. The first is that to be found in Plato's *Laws* which declares the aim of education to be:

"To give to body and to soul all the beauty and all the perfection of which they are capable."

¹²⁾ London, 1915, p. 39.

¹³⁾ P. 3, Browning ed., Cambridge, 1905.

The second is that of Scripture to be found in II Tim. 3:17:

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Of the two the first is wholly Platonic. It is beautiful. I have once even called it an anticipation of the Pauline ideal. It reminds one of the noble words of Socrates when in his defense of himself on the occasion of his trial he warns his judges that if he is set free he will continue to rebuke them for being so careless and so thoughtless about the perfecting of their own souls. Such language from pagan lips is almost startling, would be wholly startling were it not so familiar. And yet one can read too much into these words of Socrates and of Plato. Their ideal was after all purely pagan. The ideal of the harmonious development of all powers is purely Greek. Only very recently in the January, 1922, issue of the *Princeton Theological Review*, Professor Machen in a capital article on, "Liberalism or Christianity," brings out this point beautifully. Having already quoted so often and so much I want to add this passage also. It reads thus:

"In speaking of 'paganism,' we are not using a term of reproach. Ancient Greece was pagan, but it was glorious, and the modern world has not even begun to equal its achievements. What, then, is paganism? The answer is not really difficult. Paganism is that view of life which finds the highest goal of human existence in the healthy and harmonious and joyous development of exist-

ing human faculties. Very different is the Christian ideal. Paganism is optimistic with regard to unaided human nature, whereas Christianity is the religion of the broken heart."

Here we have the root of the whole matter. The humanist wants to perfect that which is from its very nature imperfectible. That Plato even felt this is evident from the concluding phrase — "of which they are capable." But Scripture comes without any qualifications, it demands that the man of God shall be perfect, and that this must be our very definite aim.

"But," it may be objected, "this is no proper ideal. It is unrealizable. Why not, as even Plato did, keep both feet on the ground?" The answer is very simple. The Master himself comes to us with this explicit injunction: "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."¹⁴ There is not a single qualifying word in the entire sentence. Did he wish a Christian to have no choice? The captain has spoken, it is for us to obey. It is precisely the realization of the fact that he should live pure and unspotted before the face of his Maker that, in the sight of his remaining imperfection, has pressed from the bosom of so many a saint the cry, "I am the chief of sinners." But, and here I quote Machen once more:

"In saying that Christianity is the religion of the broken heart, we do not mean that Christianity ends with the broken heart; we do not mean

¹⁴) Matthew 5: 48.

that the characteristic Christian attitude is a continual beating on the breast or a continual cry of 'Woe is me'. Nothing could be further from the fact. On the contrary, Christianity means that sin is faced once for all, and then is cast, by the grace of God, forever into the depths of the sea. The trouble with the paganism of ancient Greece, as with the paganism of modern times, was not in the superstructure, which was glorious, but in the foundation which was rotten. There was always something to be covered up; the enthusiasm of the architect was maintained only by ignoring the disturbing fact of sin. In Christianity, on the other hand, nothing needs to be covered up. The fact of sin is faced resolutely once for all, and is removed by the grace of God. But then, after sin has been removed by the grace of God, the Christian can proceed to develop joyously every faculty that God has given him. Such is the higher Christian humanism — a humanism founded not upon human pride but upon divine grace." ¹⁵⁾

This, it seems to me, is sound doctrine. Each morning again we begin the day with the words of the holy apostle Paul: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after it that I may apprehend."¹⁶⁾ "But can those who are converted to God perfectly keep these commandments?" asks the *Heidelberg*

¹⁵⁾ *Idem.*, p. 101.

¹⁶⁾ Philippians 3: 12.

*Catechism.*¹⁷⁾ The answer is: "No; but even the holiest men, while in this life, have only a small beginning of this obedience; yet so, that with a sincere resolution they begin to live, not only according to some, but all the commandments of God."

And so we Christian teachers stand before our pupils, covenant children all, with no lower ideal than just that of perfection. We may be accused of pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp but for once at least we can not be accused of narrowness. Furthermore, is it not true that if we would travel far our ideals must be high? Have we not a historic warning in a people who, undeniably owing to circumstances in which they found themselves, set their ideal so low that it was fully realized — the Spartans? The Ionians never realized their ideal of harmonious development and yet it was they who made all those amazing contributions to civilization we think of when we speak of Greek science, literature, and art. Not the Spartans who have left us little more than the memory of some brave men.

Perfection is the aim. "But," I hear some teacher say, "that sounds fine, only what am I going to do with it? It is too vague. How can I apply it?"

These questions are pertinent. I can not dodge them by saying that they apply equally to many, yes, most other fundamental aims. All I can say is that the way to apply the principle is to apply

¹⁷⁾ Question 114.

it. Put it to work. But how? By judging all that you say and do by your aim, in the light of your aim. Every device and every method, be it of teaching or of discipline, must be placed in the balance of this final aim. Always and always again we must ask does this tend to make of this boy, of this girl, of these pupils, perfect men and women of God? Shall I be very concrete? Very well, suppose it is your duty to teach your pupils the multiplication tables. You aim at complete mastery in, of course, the shortest time. Suppose now some one method should suggest itself that from this standpoint is superior to any other. Shall you use it? That depends. Is this one method in harmony with your final aim? If not, you must abandon it for one that is, even though you can not attain your specific end as quickly. The end always decides. If the giving of prizes is bound to foster greed and conceit, (I am not saying this is necessarily the case), then such incentives are condemned however effective stimulants they may be.

Is it in harmony with the final aim? The answer to this question should be decisive in all matters pertaining to schoolroom practice.

XXVIII

SOCRATES

The philosopher, according to Plato, is one who strives to discern that which *is* in distinction from that which seems to be. In the language of Sir Edwin Arnold, in his *Light of the World*, philosophy is

“ever straining past the things that seem
To that which is—the truth behind the dream.”

We call a man a philosopher when his constant endeavor is to get at fundamental things, to get behind phenomena, behind appearances, in order that he may there find ultimate reality, find what the German call “the things-in-themselves.”

Though Socrates shares this trait with his predecessors, his interests are by no means the same. Since Thales philosophers have always, as Browning expresses it in *Paracelsus*,

“Desired to gain one prize
In place of many,—the secret of the world,
Of man, and man’s true purpose, path and fate.”

“The secret of the world,” that the pre-Socratics sought. Fundamentally what is the world? was their query. Water, said one. Air, fire, number, said others. It is one, said some. It is many, said others. But if now we turn to Socrates and ask him a question or two we shall perceive at

once the very great change that with him comes over philosophy. It is, I know, a venturesome thing to quiz one who himself has become a past master at questioning, but he is gentle at heart and if we lay aside all presumption he is sure to answer us kindly enough.

"Pray Socrates," I say, "these my friends and I would fain know of you who is right. Is Thales who says that everything essentially is water, as such or as some modification, or is Heracleitus who asserts it is fire? Is being one, Socrates, as the monists say, or is it many as maintain the pluralists? Is it stable and fixed, as you know Parmenides teaches, or is it, as Heracleitus insists, unstable and changing?"

What, think you, will be Socrates' reply? As one who habitually professes ignorance you need expect no direct answer. He is more given to quizzing than to being quizzed. But after scanning our faces for a moment in order that he may discern the motive that prompts our questioning I fancy him replying in this wise:

"My good friends, I know not neither care I. Why will men vex themselves and perplex others by inquiring into the inscrutable, things only the Gods know and can know? Do you not think it impious to pry or seek to pry into the secrets of the gods? Moreover," continues Socrates who if not pragmatic is nothing, "do you tell me what it shall profit a man so he know these things whereof you ask me, granted they may be known? Will it sweeten his life? Make him a better friend, or

citizen, or husband, or father? Will it comfort him when he dies to know that being is one or many as the fact may be? Think you not we shall do better if we concern ourselves less about riddles no man may hope to solve and more about such vital questions as: What is justice? What is truth? What is courage? What is a good citizen? What is a state? What is virtue?"

In a word, with Socrates philosophy passes from metaphysics to ethics, from problems of being to those of conduct, from heaven to earth. First and always Socrates is an ethical philosopher. What he is eager to know is not so much "the secret of the world," but that "of man, and man's true purpose, path, and fate."

He was a child of the people, born 469 B. C., his father being a worker in stone, his mother a midwife. Of his early life we know little more than that he assumed his father's craft. He developed into the most picturesque figure in Athens and in the whole history of philosophy. In personal appearance he was, especially so for the beauty loving Greek, repulsive. His bulging eyes, big mouth, thick lips, snub nose with upturned nostrils, protruding abdomen in spite of temperate habits, disordered beard, and shuffling gait all combined to make of him an excellent butt for the ridicule of the comic poets. Neither were they slow to make the most of their opportunity, witness especially the plays of Aristophanes. But all the ungainliness and downright homeliness of the man was forgotten the moment one came under

the charm of his personality and the spell of his conversation. Living in the utmost frugality, his meat and drink of the cheapest and simplest, one cloak to his back and no shoes to his feet the year round, he lived, if anybody ever did live, the simple life. It is true he could on occasion outdrink everybody else, but that was a rare occurrence. By habit he was abstemious. According to Diogenes Laertius Socrates once said: "Others live to eat, I eat to live." Withal he was a man of prodigious strength of which he gave ample proof while serving his city as a heavy-armed soldier. To cold, hunger, thirst, and fatigue he was unusually resistant. He possessed both a cool head and a warm heart, being what Gomperz paradoxically calls "enthusiastically sober." With great physical strength he combined exceptional intellectual power, particularly that ear mark of genius, the power of concentration. Believe or not as you please the story of his having stood for twenty-four hours rooted to a single spot while lost in thought, the story, be it fact or fiction is in any case significant. According to all accounts he possessed in a high degree both physical and moral courage. For him to know the right was to do it. So far as our information goes he has few rivals in history for the unflinching performance of duty at whatever cost to himself. For all these assertions there is evidence in plenty.

Such was the man. We think of him as the greatest teacher of his day and as one of the great teachers of all time. Yet although Aris-

tophanes in his immortal comedies classifies Socrates with the sophists — the professional teachers of youth in Athens — he himself objected to being so classed. For this one cannot blame him. There was a conservative strain in Socrates and as much as any conservative Greek he detested the ways of the professional teachers of his day. True, he like they refused to swallow all of the Homeric mythology, believed that virtue can be taught, and neglected metaphysics for ethics; but where the sophist professed wisdom, as the very title he bore testified, Socrates professed ignorance, refused to be called a sophist, and would have heartily assented to the lines of Cowper:

“Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much,
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.”

Especially, too, he shared the old Greek antipathy to accepting payment for knowledge imparted. So it happened that while many a sophist waxed wealthy Socrates, though diligent in his business, was ever poverty-stricken. One can, therefore, sympathize with Xantippe, who I think has been much maligned, because she did not always meet with a smile a husband and father who seldom brought an obolus home. Why should not he, too, charge a fee like the sophists, instead of living precariously on the very little property he had, and possibly on the occasional generosity of friends? But Socrates could not accept money. He considered his services as either above or beneath reward. He would not do his work for any-

thing but love, and as Cross says Xantippe "had to keep the house going on the same commodity."

Possibly, be it said in passing, Socrates realized what a trial he must be to his wife. At all events he is always represented as exercising the utmost of philosophic patience with a quick-tempered dagger-tongued spouse. As the story goes she was one day berating him in the presence of friends and concluded her tirade by throwing water at him. "Did I not tell you," Socrates remarked goodnaturedly, "Xantippe was thundering and it would soon rain?"

I was saying that Socrates objected to being classed with the sophists both because he refused payment for instruction imparted and because he objected to the appellation itself. But this was not all. His method differed from that of the sophists as his purpose was different. Undoubtedly all sophists were not pettifoggers, some were above specious reasoning, but it cannot be denied that all too many were only too willing to make the worse appear the better reason. Not so Socrates. He had caught what his most famous pupil subsequently called, "the vision of truth."

His call to teach philosophy came in this wise. He had a friend named Chaerephon, a comrade from his youth up, who one day consulted the oracle at Delphi. It occurred to him, who thought so highly of Socrates, to ask the oracle if perhaps there was in Athens any man wiser than Socrates. The Pythian priestess answered, "there is none wiser." "Whatever does the god mean?" puzzled

Socrates upon Chaerephon's return with this information. "What is the explanation of his riddle? For I well know that I am not a wise man, — not in the least. What then could he have meant by saying that I am the wisest of men? He certainly didn't tell a lie: he is a god and couldn't do that." As he ponders and ponders a happy solution of the difficulty occurs to him. He will interview some man of fame for wisdom, prove the oracle's assertion wrong, and then proceed to Delphi to say: "You said I was the wisest of men: lo! here is a wiser!" Then the god must needs explain his meaning. In pursuance of this plan he waylays one famed in Athens for much wisdom and engages him in conversation. Imagine Socrates' amazement when he discovers that though the man passes for wise, particularly so in his own estimation, he really is not wise at all but ignorant. Now the weary round begins. He goes from politician to politician, from poet to poet, (dithyrambic, tragic, and the rest), from artisan to artisan, but everywhere he finds the same thing — the conceit of knowledge in its absence.

Now does Socrates begin to see the meaning of the oracle. After all the god has but spoken the simple truth. He is the wisest man in Athens for if he resembles his fellows in knowing nothing, he differs from them and is wiser than they in that he knows that he knows not.

If a smaller man might have taken some comfort from so dubious a superiority not so Socrates,

for if his life long he professes ignorance this does not mean that he held no tenets of any sort. He did, and it was in the light of the most fundamental of these that his discovery became for Socrates so pregnant with meaning. Of all his tenets he cherished none more ardently than that knowledge and virtue are so linked that given the former you have the latter. Do men err? It is because of ignorance. Teach a man the right and he will do it, do it if for no higher reason than self interest. You ask, how may this be? Well, replies Socrates, does not virtue bring happiness and vice misery? Yes. And do not men seek above all other things under the sun happiness? Yes. Then draw your own conclusion. Since happiness is for mankind the *summum bonum*, and misery of all things that most to be dreaded, therefore, men, if they but know it will choose virtue and refrain from evil. So you may be sure that Socrates, who loved to "follow the argument" as he was wont to say, would have categorically denied the possession of knowledge to any man who behaved immorally or unjustly.

The world was very young then. Socrates lived five centuries before Christ. Moreover, enlightened though the Greeks were they dwelt, none the less, in the darkness of heathendom. But what shall we say of those who even today, consciously or unconsciously, coolly reason and act as if the Socratic dictum had never been exploded? Lyman Abbott in a characteristic sermon on John 1:13 has this to say, and it is well said:

"That is the modern panacea. Go to, we will have an educated people! Then it will be all right. It is foolish to do wrong. Therefore we will make men rational, and then they will cease doing wrong. We have borrowed that philosophy from ancient times and imported and incorporated it here, and now not a few say we can get along without churches, without Bible, without worship, without religion Teach men to read and write, then they will be saved. Educate them; they will see it is folly to do wrong, and they will cease doing wrong. That is the argument. Does it succeed? Education is not a panacea. Equip a man with all the powers with which education can equip him, and you simply give him power with which he can carry on selfishness more skillfully and more efficiently than before. It will put an end to certain forms of sin and put others in their place. The educated man will not pick your pocket, he will only forge your name; he will not steal, he will only defalcate. He has learned how to do his robbery, his stealing, his sin on a large scale, and with somewhat less chance of detection. 'Teach this American people to read, and all will go well with it.' Well, we do read, we do write. And what is it that we read and write?"¹⁾

"Consider for a moment," says Fitch, in his *The College Course and the Preparation for Life*, "the enormous expansion of knowledge which the

¹⁾ *Modern Sermons by World Scholars*, edited by R. Scott and William C. Stiles, N. Y., vol. I, p. 11.

world has witnessed since the year 1859. What prodigious accessions to the sum of our common understanding have we seen in the natural and the humane sciences; and what marvellous uses of scientific knowledge for practical purposes have we discovered! We have mastered in these latter days a thousand secrets of nature. We have freed the mind from old ignorance and ancient superstition. We have penetrated the secrets of the body, and can almost conquer death and indefinitely prolong the span of human days. We face the facts and know the world as our fathers could never do. We understand the past and foresee the future. But the most significant thing about our present situation is this: how little has this wisdom, [I would prefer to say knowledge], in and of itself, done for us? It has made men more cunning rather than more noble. Still the body is ravaged and consumed by passion. Still men toil for others against their will, and 'The strong spill the blood of the weak for their ambition, and the sweat of the children for their greed.' Never was learning so diffused, nor the content of scholarship so large as now. Yet the great cities are as Babylon and Rome of old, where human wreckage multiplies, and hideous vices flourish, and men toil without expectancy, and live without hope, and millions exist from hand to mouth. As we survey the unusual unrest of the world today, and see the horrors of war between class and class, it would not be difficult to make out a case for the thesis that the scientific and intellectual advances

of the nineteenth century have largely worked to make men keener and more capacious in their suffering. And, at least, this is true; in just so far as the achievement of the mind has been divorced from the consecration of the spirit, in just so far knowledge has had no beneficent potency for the human race." ²⁾

But let us return to our text. Knowledge is virtue. Do you not see the overwhelming significance for Socrates of the discovery that of all the Athenians only he realizes that he knows nothing? Can you not see that given the man he was, Socrates from this moment must dedicate his life to the task of bringing home to his fellows, citizens of his beloved Athens, the fact that they know nothing? Nothing, mark you, of fundamental things. We must not misunderstand Socrates. When he professes ignorance and accuses others of even greater ignorance he does not mean that neither he nor they know anything whatever. Socrates was no fool. He does not deny knowing that two and two make four. Not that, but he knows nothing, and the Athenians, including the proud sophists, know nothing, nothing, nothing of really vital things. And this is good Scriptural doctrine. Listen to St. Paul. "If any man," says he, "think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." ³⁾

²⁾ Boston, 1914, p. 172.

³⁾ I Corinthians 8:2.

I can probably best bring home the meaning of Socrates' discovery for himself by using an illustration. According to Christian theology what is the first thing he who would be saved must know? "How great my sins and miseries are," says the *Heidelberg Catechism*. If man really is a sinner there is no hope for salvation till he realizes the fact, and, certainly, the most parlous state he can possibly be in is to fancy himself righteous. How shall you save a man from sin when he thinks himself innocent of guilt? That is why Jesus says over and over that publicans and sinners, steeped as some of these were in vice and evil, were nearer the kingdom of heaven than scribes and pharisees despite their fasts, and alms, and prayers, and what not.

Socrates takes a very much similar attitude. For him the one life is the virtuous life. To lead such a life knowledge and knowledge only is essential; but then how grave is the state of the ignorant, and how immeasurably graver is the condition of him who with profound ignorance combines conceit of much knowledge? Yet that, according to Socrates, was precisely the situation in Athens. Socrates was an optimist. Did the Athenians but realize their benighted state, then, yes, then there would be hope for them, but not till then. And now the god had assigned to him not so much the task of imparting knowledge, nay, for this teacher he must prepare the way as did the Baptist for the Lord; to him fell the humbler but incomparably more difficult task of first teach-

ing these men of Athens the painful and humiliating truth that as yet they knew nothing.

Now, I trust, everybody here understands why this devoted man, in season and out of season, through good report and ill, returns day after day with never failing courtesy to the wearisome task of preaching to his beloved Athenians: "Ye know nothing." To be the gad-fly of the Athenians, as he himself expresses it in homely phrase, that was Socrates' conception of his task, a task divinely imposed. For by the whole bent of him his was a profoundly religious nature, one of whom Jesus might have said: "Thou art nigh unto the kingdom of heaven." I doubt not that Socrates was much more firmly assured of his being divinely called to teach and to preach than is many a Christian preacher today. This Plato brings out again and again in the *Apology*. Throughout the whole of this noble speech there breathes the unwavering consciousness of a mission from on high.

"It is the god," says Socrates, "who has laid this duty upon me, by means of oracles and dreams and every way whereby God manifests his will to man."

Again: "Now, therefore, men of Athens, so far from pleading my own cause, as might be supposed, I am pleading yours, lest by condemning me you should sin in the matter of God's gift to you But perhaps you will lightly put me to death and then sleep away the rest of your lives, unless the God [God throughout in the *Apol-*

ogy is for Socrates Apollo] in his love for you sends you some other missionary."

And again: "Someone perhaps may say: 'Can you not go away, Socrates, and dwell in another city, keeping silence and leading a quiet life?' Alas! It is so difficult to persuade you on this point. For if I say that to do this would be to disobey the God, you will not believe me."

Once more: "So, fellow Athenians, I am not making the present defense just to save my own life, as might be supposed. Not at all. I am doing so to save you from sinning against God and rejecting his gift to you by condemning me. For if you kill me you will not easily find another man who like me will, at God's bidding, literally stick to the state like a gad-fly to a horse."

And then in language anticipating that of Christ's apostles he cries out: "Fellow Athenians, I love you, I am devoted to you; but I shall obey God rather than you. And while breath and strength hold out I shall never cease from pursuing wisdom, or from exhorting anyone of you whom I may meet, speaking frankly to him, and saying in my usual fashion: 'My friend, as a citizen of Athens, a city greatest and most famous for its wisdom and power, are you not ashamed to be so greedy for wealth and name and fame, so careless and so thoughtless about wisdom and truth and the perfecting of your own soul?' And if he contradicts me, and says that he does care about these things, I shall not take him at his word and straightway let him go, but I shall

question him and cross-question him and test him, and if I find that he is not virtuous, but only says that he is, I shall rebuke him for prizing least what is of most value and prizing more what is of less worth. This service I shall render to every one I meet, young and old, citizen or alien, but especially to you citizens, for you are more nearly akin to me. Be assured, this is God's command. And I hold that no greater blessing has ever befallen you in Athens than this my service to God. For I spend all my time going about among you, persuading you, old and young alike, not to be so solicitous about your bodies or your possessions, but first of all, and most earnestly, to consider how to make your souls as perfect as possible: and telling you that wealth does not bring virtue; rather, virtue brings wealth and every other human good, private or public. If then by such teaching I corrupt the youth, these must be pernicious doctrines. But if anyone asserts that I teach anything else than this he lies. Wherefore, Athenians, either listen to Anytus or not, acquit me or not; but rest assured I shall never alter my way of life — no, not though many deaths await me."

And then, finally, we have the heroic proclamation: "Men of Athens, I should be guilty of a crime indeed, if . . . through fear of death or anything else whatever I should desert the post to which I am assigned by God."

Enough. More than enough to bring home to you the fact that Socrates in all sincerity be-

lieved himself called to the work he was doing day by day in Athens. To be sure, it brought him no income, it neither won nor held the affections of a wife who understood not her husband's mission, and it brought him the enmity of the great and all those of repute for wisdom whom he spared not, as it brought him the ill will of the masses who mistook him for a glorified tramp, too lazy to provide for either his family or himself and ceaselessly chattering about they knew not what.

But Socrates patiently, heroically, cheerfully pursued the even tenor of his way in no wise ignorant of the heavy clouds gathering above his head, never mistaking the temper of the citizenry of his beloved Athens.

His manner of executing his task though one does not well see how he could have proceeded much differently, did not a little to make his mission unacceptable. His method of teaching had a double aspect. He would begin by buttonholing the first man who could be induced to listen to him, the conversation beginning with some simple question, modestly put, leading easily to a reply that involved some obvious generalization. Let us suppose the question is that of the difference between right and wrong. The person whom Socrates is interrogating asserts his knowledge of the distinction, and may even be irritated that Socrates should ask him so simple a question. Thereupon Socrates sets to in earnest. He asks, let us

say, whether lying and deception are right or wrong.

"Wrong," replies the pupil.

"But in case of war is it wrong to deceive the enemy?"

"No, of course not, Socrates. Even children know that all is fair in love and war."

"I see," continues Socrates, "it is wrong to deceive our friends, right to deceive our enemies."

"Just so," agrees the pupil, who is grateful for this means of escape from what was becoming a tight place. But Socrates is not through.

"Suppose you have a friend who has, because of reverses, become weary of life. You fear he contemplates suicide. Suppose, further, he comes to beg of you your knife, would you not, under the circumstances, be justified in saying that you have no knife, (even though you do have one), and then, while pretending to fetch one, communicate with his relatives and friends?"

The pupil is puzzled but confesses he sees no harm in this deceit though practised now not on an enemy but on a friend.

Thus Socrates would continue, compelling his pupil or victim, whatever it may please you to call him and however he may have regarded himself, to modify or even flatly contradict all of his assertions and admissions, until he finally comes, reluctantly enough, to the confession of ignorance. This would hurt but it was essential for reasons already indicated. Once having gained the admission of ignorance Socrates might apply

the second part of his method, the maieutic method, consisting of a series of questions by means of which he elicited from his pupil the whole truth of which the latter had at first seen only a fragment. You must know, Socrates sometimes said, that my mother was a midwife and I am following her profession, only it is my function to help bring not children but ideas into the world, and just as the children were not my mother's so the ideas are not mine.

That the Socratic irony was painful, at times excruciatingly so, should be obvious. From a sense of duty and doubtless, too, because he delighted in pricking their bubble of conceit, Socrates hugely enjoyed cornering the sophists and other men of fame for wisdom, in order to reveal to an appreciative audience, always ready to congregate in Athens, the hollowness of their pretensions. Being a past-master in the application of his method he seldom failed to accomplish his purpose, often to the enjoyment of bystanders, always to the chagrin, to the mortification of the victim.

The result was inevitable and easy to forecast. Indeed, knowing what we do, one marvels that Socrates was suffered so long. For decades he was a marked figure in Athens, the butt of the comic poets, including the greatest of them all — Aristophanes. Especially did they bring him on the stage in the character of a man engaged in frequent amours with young men, an idea that must have taken root from the fact that Socrates found his most ardent admirers among the youth

of Athens. Malice was only too quick to interpret this relation in accordance with practices lamentably common among the Athenians of the day. Other marked personalities before and since have been hounded by such misrepresentations. One does not quickly forget the gross tales current in Rome about the practices of early Christians in their assemblies. As a matter of fact, Socrates' doctrine and example were directed against the sensual relations common between men and boys in the Greek capital. Xenophon and Plato both testify that Socrates warned against the peril of these attachments.

But these factors were operative against Socrates for a decade or two at least before he was brought to trial. Why was the formal indictment not made until Socrates had passed his seventieth year? The answer is that it was not only his moral and religious teachings that aroused suspicion but also his political views. Socrates advocated an aristocracy of talent. Now only four years before his death Athens had overthrown the oligarchical government of the Thirty and re-established a democracy. For Socrates at this time to point out the defects of the democratic form of government was more than many an Athenian could bear. The notion that at heart Socrates was an oligarch was strengthened by the fact that he was on excellent terms with some of the gang of Thirty Tyrants, a fact that did not predispose opinion in his favor. His oligarchic connections were undoubtedly a factor in bring-

ing on the trial, it being forgotten apparently that Socrates, who associated with high and low, noble and ignoble, had as many friends among the democracy as among the aristocracy. Moreover, if Socrates could dare the judges, as he did, to question his pupils with regard to his teaching it remains true that at least one of them, Alcibiades, developed into a thoroughly demoralized character. No one today would hold Socrates responsible for the career of some particular pupil any more than we hold Seneca responsible for the misdeeds of Nero, but when passions are inflamed men do not reason coolly, men do not reason at all.

Thus it came about that after much delay the inevitable happened. Plans were set on foot for ridding Athens of this pest. Charges were trumped up and Socrates brought to trial. The indictment consisted in the main of two counts, teaching irreligion and corrupting the youth of Athens. The trial took place before the Dikastery, a body consisting of some five hundred judges, leading men of Athens. The chief accusers were one Anytus, a rich tradesman and leader of the democratic party; and one Miletus, a poet and rhetorician, irritated by Socrates' grilling cross-examinations.

As regards the charge of irreligion, the case against Socrates was weak, since he conformed to the worship of his day. Yet these men felt more than they could prove, for there was that in Socrates' teaching which tended to undermine the old mythology. As for the charge of his corrupting

the youth there was no evidence whatever. He could easily prove by witnesses that he constantly taught obedience, patriotism, temperance, and other virtues.

Had Socrates cared to make a strong defense, had he endeavored to win the good-will of his judges, the outcome need not have been what it was. On this historians are agreed. But so far from doing this he neglected to prepare his case for trial. He not only refused the assistance of Lysias, the greatest orator of the day, but even failed to prepare a set speech; yet even so he was condemned by a majority of not more than five or six votes. The death penalty did not necessarily follow. In Athens as among us the first question to be decided in a trial was that of guilt or innocence. Then, in case of conviction, there was a second ballot which set the penalty, while between these two ballotings the accused was given opportunity to suggest the penalty he might deem appropriate, or which he thought he might persuade the judges to limit themselves to, be it a fine or be it banishment. On such occasions as among us the accused was wont, either in person or by some special pleader, to play upon the emotions of the judges. Often a weeping wife or children were brought into their presence. Socrates did none of these things. So far from appearing a suppliant for mercy he assumed the role of a monitor, rebuking his judges instead of conciliating them. He even went out of his way to irritate the judges. So far from proposing a fine or ban-

ishment he suggested, with provoking irony, that he be supported in the Prytaneum at the public expense; that is, he asked for a distinction Athens accorded only to those citizens whom she sought to honor. The height of audacity. The death sentence followed.

Now why did Socrates act as he did? There are various explanations. One says he was old and weary of life. Another says that he sought the martyr's crown. To me the explanation seems very simple. Socrates had diligently and faithfully performed the task assigned him, as he believed, by God himself; the performance of this task made him enemies, who bring him to trial on a trumped-up charge; he proves these charges false, and pleads that he has but performed a divinely imposed mission, yet is found guilty; shall he now stultify himself by suggesting a fine or banishment? It is true his friends by their insistence finally do persuade him to name a sum of money which they are eager to pay, but his whole being rebels against it. Shall he be fined, more, shall he himself suggest a fine for performing a divinely assigned task? Shall he prove recreant to duty by suggesting banishment as an alternative when God has called him to labor among the Athenians? It is not mere irony when he offers as an alternative that he be henceforward supported as a distinguished citizen at the public expense, for who more than he, after decades of the most trying labor, more merited such reward? In a word, Socrates no more pleads

for himself than did the Master when unjustly accused and convicted by the Sanhedrin. He had done no wrong.

It so happened that when Socrates was condemned a period of thirty days must pass before the execution of judgment, it being a holy season. So for a month Socrates was confined in goal. Prison regulations in Athens would not seem to have been strict for we find Socrates entertaining the friends whose names have been preserved for us by Plato. Convinced as they were of their master's innocence a plot was hatched for his escape, one that apparently was easy of execution, but which shattered upon Socrates' unflinching determination to abide by the decision of the court. He had been tried and condemned all in the regular way by the legally instituted machinery of justice; how could he now resort to any illegal plans for escaping the punishment which, though undeserved, had fallen to his lot in the ordinary process of law? So the idea had to be abandoned.

During his month of grace Socrates' friends and pupils met with him daily, discussing, according to the *Phaedo*, the nature and the immortality of the soul. Some are inclined to ascribe the arguments for the future existence of the soul to Plato himself rather than to Socrates, since till his trial the latter is agnostic rather than otherwise, but however this may be, we may be sure that these final days were days of noble commun-

ion between master and disciples. The last moments Plato describes thus:

“Crito made a sign to the servant, who was standing by, and he went out, and having been absent for some time, returned with the jailer carrying a cup of poison. Socrates said: ‘You, my good friend, who are experienced in these matters, shall give me directions how I am to proceed.’ The man answered: ‘You have only to walk about until your legs are heavy and then to lie down and the poison will act.’ At the same time he handed the cup to Socrates, who, in the easiest and gentlest manner, without the least fear or change of color or feature, looking at the man with all his eyes, Echecrates, as his manner was, took the cup and said: ‘What do you say about making a libation out of this cup to any god? May I, or not?’ The man answered: ‘We only prepare, Socrates, just as much as we deem enough.’ ‘I understand,’ he said, ‘but I may and must ask the gods to prosper my journey from this to that other world — even so — and so be it according to my prayer.’ Then holding the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he drank the poison. And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow, but when we saw him drinking, and saw, too, that he had finished the draught, we could no longer forebear, and, in spite of myself, my own tears were flowing fast so that I covered my face and wept over myself, for certainly I was not weeping over him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having lost

such a friend. Nor was I the first, for Crito, when he found himself unable to restrain his tears, had got up and walked away, and I followed; and at that moment, Appollodorus, who had been weeping all the time, broke out in a loud and passionate cry which made cowards of us all. Socrates alone retained his calmness: 'What is this strange outcry?' he said. 'I sent away the women mainly in order that they might not offend in this way, for I have heard that a man should die in peace. Be quiet then, and have patience.' When we heard that we were ashamed and restrained our tears; he walked about until, as he said, his legs began to fail, and then he lay on his back, according to the directions, and the man that gave him the poison now and then looked at his feet and legs, and after a while he pressed his foot hard, and asked him if he could feel; and he said 'No;' and then his leg, and so upwards and upwards, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And he felt them himself and said: 'When the poison reaches the heart that will be the end.' He was beginning to grow cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said (they were his last words): 'Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius, will you remember to pay the debt?' 'The debt shall be paid,' said Crito; 'Is there anything else?' There was no answer to this question; but in a minute or two a movement was heard, and the attendants uncovered him; his eyes were set and Crito closed his eyes and mouth."

Thus died the most human of philosophers.

"We think of the Greek philosophers before and after him," says Benn, "as so many marble statues, but of him as a living, speaking, human figure." There are many who have never so much as heard of Kant or Hegel, but who does not know at least the name of Socrates? John Addington Symonds, the distinguished historian of the Renaissance, tells us how the mere glimpse of a bit of hemlock sufficed to remind a Venetian gondolier of Socrates. What teacher could ever grow weary of telling his students the old but always new story of this lover of his kind, of this lover of truth, of justice, of virtue, of sobriety, of plain living and high thinking; of this heroic figure, so unflinchingly devoted to duty as he saw it that he brings the blush of shame to many in Christendom who enjoy privileges and opportunities he never knew? Shall we not cherish his memory? Aye, our very presence here testifies to that. But how shall we do it? By eulogies? Yes, but not best so, for of all men Socrates cared least for mere reputation. He has not left a book, has not left so much as a single line to perpetuate his memory. No, I am not waxing homiletic, I have no desire to preach to you; had I, this is neither the time nor the place. I am simply speaking in the spirit of the man himself, as I am sure you will all admit, when I say that we shall best honour him if we heed the resounding words with which he addressed his fellow Athenians, words that I have already quoted but which I repeat in closing:

"I spend all my time going about among you, persuading you, old and young alike, not to be so solicitous about your bodies or your possessions, but first of all, and most earnestly, to consider how to make your souls as perfect as possible."

My friends, shall we not, you and I, in the language of this sage of old, "be ashamed to be so greedy for wealth and name and fame, so careless and so thoughtless about wisdom and truth and the perfecting of our own soul?"

